TOWARD THE TEXT: A THEORY OF GOOD PREACHING UTILIZING THE PERSUASIVE ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION, RHETORIC, AND ADVERTISING

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the Faculty of the

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Doctor of Ministry

by

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This professional project, completed by

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ABSTRACT

Toward the Text: A Theory of Good Preaching
Utilizing the Persuasive Elements of Communication,
Rhetoric, and Advertising

Michael J. Adams

Much of today's preaching is structured and delivered in such a way as to render it dull, lifeless, and irrelevant. Perhaps the primary cause of this malady is the preacher's misconception of the Word preached which makes the audience, listeners, and congregation less important to the communication process than they really are. We must ask ourselves, "Do preachers really know the people to whom they preach?"

This project suggests that proper audience analysis is the critical factor in the eventual success of any message designed to persuade, be it secular or sacred. It is this writer's contention that contemporary marketing and advertising firms have a better understanding of the needs, desires, drives, and questions of the contemporary audience than do preachers. Madison Avenue offers us insights into what it takes to motivate people to eventually make an action-decision.

The difficulties of the communication process are discussed in order to demonstrate the preacher's need to study diligently and carefully the field of interpersonal communication. Preachers cannot assume that they are communicating simply because they verbalize God's Word. Communication is to be dialogical in nature whether that dialogue be verbal or silent. Hence, feedback is discussed as an ally of the communicator.

It is the preacher's ultimate responsibility to persuade. The art of rhetoric and persuasion must be revisited and applied. It is this writer's contention that persuasion

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cannot be avoided since all language is value-laden. It is the responsibility of the preacher to use persuasive techniques in an ethical, noble manner. In addition, various contemporary preachers' views are interspersed within this project to help support the arguments presented.

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Table of Contents

Chapter

1. Introduction 1
 - Problem Addressed by the Project 1
 - Importance of the Problem 1
 - Thesis 5
 - Definitions of Major Terms 6
 - Communication 6
 - Rhetoric 6
 - Persuasion 7
 - Marketing 7
 - Advertising 8
 - Good Preaching 8
 - Work Previously Done in the Field 9
 - Scope and Limitations of the Project 11
 - Procedure for Integration 12
 - Chapter Outline 12
2. Communication 14
 - Defining Communication 14
 - Communication as a Process 17
 - Communication as a Dialogue 18
 - Communication as an Effect 21

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The Nature of Language 23
3. Rhetoric and Persuasion 27
4. Learning from Marketing and Advertising 36
Attributes of a Persuader 39
Psychological Advertising 41
Advertising Techniques Applicable to Preaching 42
Humor 42
Testimonials 45
Problem Solving 46
Benefits First, Then Features 48
News 49
Attainability 50
Emotion 52
Closing 54
5. Summary and Conclusions 56
Audience Analysis 60
Interest 61
Feedback as Dialogue 62
Needs of the Hearers 64
Appendixes 67
A. "Ordinary Folks Make Great Disciples" by Stuart Briscoe 67
B. Sample Demographics 77
Bibliography 82

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Problem Addressed by the Project

This project deals with the persistent problem of dull, lifeless, unimaginative, irrelevant, and non persuasive preaching which gluts the American pulpit. The root of the problem is discovered in a misconception of the Word preached which makes the audience, listeners, or congregation less important to the communication process than they really are. Simply put, preachers very often neglect to listen to the listeners.

Importance of the Problem

Many preachers are simply out-of-touch with the needs, desires, and feelings of their congregation. As a result, they are painfully unaware of what stirs people to reflection and motivates them to action. Preachers have a tendency to approach their audience subjectively, that is, the preacher's subjective needs, desires, and interests become the point of contact (intrapersonal) for communication and, inevitably, the focus of the pulpit message. Ronald Sleeth argues against the subjective approach to preaching.

> The assumption that whatever the preacher has to say is important is fallacious.... Preaching which emanates from the preacher, practically unrelated to the audience, is subjective preaching.... The objective approach, on the other hand, is the preacher's attempt to stand outside himself and see how he can adapt the Gospel to the needs of the congregation.[1]

[1]Ronald E. Sleeth, Persuasive Preaching (New York: Harper & Row, 1956), 12.

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In addition, many preachers have never been trained in classical rhetorical theory or, if they have, they have often viewed it from a secular perspective and refused to apply its principles to their preaching. Hence, the persuasive aspects of rhetoric have been viewed as hidden or manipulative and, therefore, completely disowned. The whole field of persuasion is generally viewed as little more than manipulation and for that reason diligently avoided.[2]

Yet contemporary Americans can scarcely avoid the impact of persuasion since we are bombarded daily with persuasive messages from a myriad of communicative mediums, most of which are involved with advertising in one way or another. The tendency to persuade is not found only at the level of mass communication, it is personal as well. As Horace Schwerin and Henry Newell note, "Persuasion is ubiquitous. . . . In and out of business, all of us spend a good part of our daily lives trying to persuade others of what we see as some minor or major truth and in tuning in or tuning out the persuasive efforts of others."[3] Since persuasion plays such an integral part in human communication the preacher should view it as an opportunity to influence the lives of others in a positive, altruistic way—a noble part of the responsibility of being human.

It is my contention that persuasion can be a positive, beneficial concept, one that sets the foundation for good communication; and who is it that would argue against good communication? Hence, like Aristotle, we should understand that the ability to find, in any subject, all available means of persuasion is a noble and positive task, one that assists the preacher in identifying and addressing properly the true needs and desires of the

[2]For a comprehensive book on psychological manipulation see Vance Packard, The Hidden Persuaders (New York: Pocket Books, 1958).

[3]Horace S. Schwerin and Henry H. Newell, Persuasion in Marketing (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1981), 11.

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congregation. For the preacher the art of persuasion has a subtle, but important, relationship with relevance, creativity, and the art of interesting.

Life is filled with change, growth, and development. Through persuasive communication one is often stimulated or motivated to change a particular attitude, belief, or behavior. Marketing experts and advertising agencies are well aware of the vicissitudinous nature of humanity, and Madison Avenue knows well the power of persuasion to effect change. Hence, advertising shapes egos, influences our sense of self-worth, cautions us, exhorts us, challenges us, reminds us of our past and future, and encourages us to behave in ways unfamiliar to us. Good preaching should do the same.

Yet, most contemporary sermons are inadequately organized and completely bereft when it comes to style and the techniques of persuasion necessary to produce a positive, action-decision. A change in behavior usually demands a change in beliefs, and one rarely changes beliefs without being persuaded to do so. The persuasion may be subtle or forceful; it may appeal to the emotions or to the intellect; it may be simple or complex. Whatever the case, preachers should have the intent to persuade foremost in their thoughts.

At this point Madison Avenue is far wiser than the average preacher. Madison Avenue knows the questions people are asking and then provides the answers through advertising. Hence, audience analysis acquired through marketing research, the two primary functions of which are to provide information for decision making and to develop new knowledge, is critical to the advertising industry.[4] Whether or not advertising is done ethically or whether or not the answers of advertisers are true is not the point (at least initially). The point is that through systematic investigation, advertisers

[4]George Kress, Marketing Research (Reston, Va.: Reston Publishing, 1979), 3.

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are aware of the kinds of questions being asked by the contemporary audience and attempting to answer them. Should not preachers be equally cognizant of questions being asked by their audience (congregation) and provide answers accordingly? We will explore some of the possibilities preachers have for obtaining knowledge of their audience and then applying that knowledge toward the formulation of a sermon.

This project, therefore, is primarily concerned with a type of knowledge preachers should have before they ever come to the biblical text: knowledge of the contemporary audience in the contemporary culture, including feelings, drives, desires, needs, etc. A preacher should anticipate the audience, be it an audience of one or thousands, be that audience universal or quite specific.[5] Hence, the concentration is on the form or style of a sermon rather than on the biblical text. The words biblical text are used rather than the word content since good communication demands good content structured in a way that assists the communicative process. Sermon content is important, but it must be packaged within a form and style that is creative, fresh, and purposeful.

At this point, the Christian preacher may be asking himself or herself, "What, if anything at all, does the theme of persuasion have do with the preaching of God's Word?" For the answer to this question we need only to turn to chapter one of God's Word. Amazingly, we discover in Genesis the very first sales-pitch, given by the proto-rhetorician, the serpent.[6] Walter Nash describes the scheme thusly:

> It works round a few emphatically sharp points, represented by the words "every," "surely," "for God doth know," and "ye shall be." More precisely it works round a pattern of utterances embodying these emphases. There is,

[5]See Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 17 – 35.

[6]Walter Nash, Rhetoric: The Wit of Persuasion (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 1.

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> to begin with, a teasing question, "Hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree?;" then there is a robust assurance, "Ye shall not surely die;" and then there is an appeal to authority, "For God doth know. . . your eyes shall be opened;" which is followed quickly by the absolute guarantee, "ye shall be gods."[7]

It seems remarkable that the serpent's persuasive pattern of the teasing question, the robust assurance, the appeal to authority, and the absolute guarantee is a common strategy used by contemporary advertisers.

For a New Testament example of persuasion we need only look to the Apostle Paul. That Paul was a frequent employer of rhetorical method is beyond question. His speech at Mars Hill (Acts 17:22-34) was effective enough to produce at least two converts--Dionysius and Damaris. The speech has a classical rhetorical structure of proem, body, climax, and peroration. It also contains rhetorical devices such as simile, enthymeme, example, and illustration. It should not surprise us that it was structured in a persuasive manner since Paul was an advocate of persuasion. We should remember that it was Paul who declared, "Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others" (2 Cor. 5:11, NRSV).

Thesis

This project is designed to demonstrate that if a preacher has a clear understanding of communication theory and especially the art of persuasion, coupled with contemporary insights of marketing and advertising, integrated with ethical principles, and is able to apply that knowledge, biblical preaching can be creative, relevant, interesting, and move people to positive action-decisions which benefit humanity.

[7]Nash, 2.

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Definitions of Major Terms

Communication

Few words have as many meanings as communication. Generally, communication is the interaction of stimulus and response in all the spheres where it occurs. It is generally known that communication always requires at least three elements: the source, the message, and the receiver or destination. This writer will define it as the process of human beings responding to the face-to-face, purposive, symbolic behavior, both verbal and nonverbal, of other persons.

Rhetoric

Howard Martin and C. William Colburn define rhetoric simply as "communication intended to influence hearers."[8] Rhetoric was first revealed by classical rhetors and defined as the art of argumentation and informative discourse. Within the context of classical rhetors this writer will limit his definition to the Aristotelian paradigm pertaining to the faculty of finding, in any subject, all the available means of persuasion with the design to elicit from hearers, responses consistent with the speaker's purpose.[9] From a classical standpoint rhetoric was the systematic study of the art of persuasion, especially as applied to civil affairs, law, and teaching. Perhaps John McClure's more

[8]Howard H. Martin and C. William Colburn, Communication and Consensus: An Introduction to Rhetorical Discourse (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), 136.

[9]Aristotle, On Rhetoric, trans. George A. Kennedy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 36.

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contemporary definition describes it best, "Rhetoric is the purposeful use of verbal language in relation to a particular audience."[10]

Persuasion

Persuasion is the art of stimulating or motivating someone, through communication, to change a particular attitude, belief, or behavior. The process of persuasion is usually targeted toward action, whereby we "engineer consent."[11] Persuasion must not be confused with coercion whereby someone changes or acts differently because of the threat of force, physical harm, or punishment. Coercive persuasion rarely has any kind of lasting impact, that is, as soon as the threat is diminished or extricated the old behavior returns. Persuasion is basically amoral, neither right or wrong. Why someone persuades, and with what means, and to what ends are the factors which determine the ethics of persuasion. The motive factors need to be continually reassessed by the preacher. Ethical persuasion is communication in the best interest of the audience that does not depend on false or misleading information to change an audience's attitude or behavior. Within the context of ethical preaching I will discuss the three aspects of persuasion described by Aristotle, namely, ethos, pathos, and logos.

Marketing

The most concise definition of marketing comes from Joel Evans and Barry Berman: "Marketing is the anticipation, management, and satisfaction of demand

[10]John S. McClure, The Four Codes of Preaching: Rhetorical Strategies (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 3.

[11]Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, Modern Rhetoric (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), 176.

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through the exchange process."[12] The anticipation of demand involves consumer research on a regular basis that introduces products that are desired by the consumers. The management of demand involves stimulation, facilitation, and regulation. The satisfaction of demand involves the fulfillment of consumer expectations. The process is not complete until consumers exchange their time, money, or talents for the product offered by the institution.[13] For the purposes of this paper the primary focus of marketing will be its demand for current audience analysis, that is, an accurate understanding of consumer behavior.

Advertising

Advertising is paid, nonpersonal communication regarding goods, services, organizations, people, places, and ideas that is transmitted through various media by business firms, nonprofit organizations, and individuals who are in some way identified in the advertising message as the sponsor.[14] The message of the advertisement, generally controlled by the sponsor, attempts to make the audience aware of and favorable to the product. For the purposes of this paper advertising will be analyzed for its persuasive content.

Good Preaching

Good preaching is preaching that is truthful, interesting, relevant, persuasive, and sensitive to the needs of the congregation. It must be a blend of the old and the new.

[12]Joel R. Evans and Barry Berman, Marketing, 4th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 9.

[13]Evans and Berman, 11.

[14]Evans and Berman, 484.

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George Sweazey offers a simple, yet poignant observation, "Preaching has to be as old as the ways of God with men, and as new as the morning paper. Many of its techniques remain valid through the centuries, and others scarcely last a decade. It must change to match the thought forms and vocabulary of every generation."[15] Good preaching is keenly aware of both ancient history and contemporary culture and is able through intelligent, purposive planning to relate the two in meaningful fashion.

Work Previously Done in the Field

A considerable amount of work has been done regarding communication and rhetorical theory in general. One such noble effort is that of Carroll Arnold and John Bowers, the Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory. George Kennedy has done exemplary work in the field of classical rhetoric. His work, Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times, is excellent. In addition, George Corbett's book, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, has been helpful. Rhetoric and the New Testament by Burton Mack and Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels by Burton Mack and Vernon K. Robbins are helpful works for those who wish to pursue the field of rhetorical criticism. Other contemporary authors such as Alexander Drummond, Donald Clark, Maurice Nathanson, Amos Wilder, Walter Nash, Chaim Perelman, and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca have produced helpful works in the field of rhetoric. Of course, much additional thought can be gleaned from ancient rhetors such as Isocrates, Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Quintilian.

With the advent of radio and television a great deal of literature has appeared regarding marketing and advertising theory. It is a mammoth, billion-dollar business.

[15]George E. Sweazey, Preaching the Good News (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 10.

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Important names in the field include David Ogilvy, Regis McKenna, Al Ries, Zig Ziglar, William Myers, and Robert Dilenschneider. Horace Schwerin and Henry Newell have provided important insight with their book Persuasion in Marketing. An especially helpful compend of thought in the areas of communication research and the behavioral sciences is found in Dimensions of Communication, edited by Lee Richardson.

Books dealing with fresh approaches to preaching are becoming numerous. Books on the cutting edge of new theory in communicating biblical texts include: David Buttrick's Homiletic: Moves and Structures; Fred Craddock's works including Preaching and As One Without Authority; Henry Mitchell's works including The Recovery of Preaching and Celebration and Experience in Preaching; Thomas Long's works including The Witness of Preaching and The Senses of Preaching; Eugene Lowry's The Homiletical Plot; and Charles Rice's The Embodied Word. Arthur Van Seters alludes to the subject of my proposal when in his book, Preaching as a Social Act, he queries, "How does the media preaching of advertisers, commentators, and wide-screen-message films affect sermon listeners in the pews?"[16]

However, this writer has yet to see a book that delves directly into the subject of my proposal, that is, the relationship between contemporary preaching and techniques of persuasion used by marketing and advertising firms. Is it possible that the thinking and strategy behind Madison Avenue (thinking and strategy that motivates millions of people to act daily) can contribute something beneficial to the preacher? Through this project the writer will attempt to establish the beneficiality of knowing what's going on in the field of advertising and attempt to apply that knowledge to the area of preaching.

[16]Arthur Van Seters, introduction to Preaching as a Social Act: Theology and Practice, ed. A. Van Seters (Nashville: Abingdon, 1988), 13.

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Paul W. Egertson's Ph.D. dissertation (School of Theology at Claremont, 1976) will be helpful. His title is Sacramental Rhetoric: The Relation of Preaching to Persuasion in American Lutheran Homiletics. Another work that will provide insight is Brent Leathers' D.Min. project (School of Theology at Claremont, 1990) entitled, Marketing the Church Back to Itself: A Paradigm for Renewal in the United Methodist Church.

Scope and Limitations of the Project

Given the mammoth dimensions of the fields of communication and marketing, it is necessary that limits be placed on this study. The aim is to reveal the best techniques, both of classical and contemporary persuasion, and relate them to contemporary preaching. The rhetorical theories of Plato, Cicero, and Quintilian are discussed briefly but the focus is on the rhetorical theories of Aristotle. The example of contemporary persuasion will come from the fields of marketing and advertising. The ancient rhetors and the current ad agencies are excellent paradigms for the art of persuasion—models with which preachers should be familiar.

This work will not be concerned with exegetical or hermeneutical aspects of biblical texts. As the title of this work suggests, the concern presented here is a move toward the text, that is, a concern for an understanding of communication and persuasion before one arrives at the text itself. Preachers may apply their exegetical or hermeneutical discoveries as they please; my point is that they must have a goal, design, or plan as they move toward the text — something that must take place before initiating any exegetical or hermeneutical evaluation or scripture. Preachers should think in terms of persuasion, design, and interest before they think in terms of biblical content.

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Procedure for Integration

The method used in this project primarily involves library research from books and articles found in the public domain. Additionally, my personal experience as a preacher will allow the writer to reflect on certain components of preaching proven to be effective in the area of persuasion.

Chapter Outline

In Chapter 2 communication is defined. Attention is given to the effects of communication when understood as a process and as a dialogue. An attempt is made to establish elements necessary for effective communication and preaching. In addition, the effects of communication and the nature of language will be discussed.

Chapter 3 initially deals with definitions of rhetoric and persuasion and their possible contributions to good preaching. This chapter deals also with how the preacher can avoid being manipulative while utilizing Aristotle's three modes of persuasion: ethos, logos, and pathos.

Chapter 4 deals with the techniques of audience analysis used by marketing firms and advertising agencies. This chapter is devoted also to a study of the effective methods of persuasion used by advertisers. In addition, advertising thought and methodology that can be adapted and transferred for use by preachers will be examined and evaluated.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of the project with concluding remarks and offers suggestions for the improvement of preaching in general. The writer's intent is to persuade preachers to think again about the art of rhetorical discourse and persuasive preaching and then to be courageous enough to implement it in their own churches. A number of contemporary preachers' homiletical thoughts related to the chapter subjects are integrated into all five chapters. The preachers include David Buttrick, Charles Rice,

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Henry Mitchell, Eugene Lowry, Thomas Long, Clyde Fant, George Sweazey, and Fred Craddock.

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CHAPTER 2

Communication

Defining Communication

Because few words have as many meanings as communication, the term is often prefaced with adjectives in order to determine a specific area of application. Hence, we find verbal communication, nonverbal communication, intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, and mass communication, to name a few. According to the old Shannon-Weaver model of communication developed in the late 1940s, the basic elements of all communication involve a sender, a signal (message), a channel, and a receiver (one who responds). The most general definition of communication (normally attributed to Laswell) is "the study of what, transmitted by whom, over what channels ,to whom, and with what effect." Admittedly, the source, message, channel, receiver pattern works well on a general level. We must be careful, however, to not oversimplify the complexities of the communication process. Thomas Long admonishes those who view communication to be as simple as the Shannon-Weaver model:

> As we listen to a person speaking to us, we are not pieces of electronic equipment receiving and holding the data. We are human beings interacting with what the speaker is saying, sifting it, debating it, adding to it. We are thinking what we will have for lunch, wondering how things are going at home.... If anyone wants to assess what is happening in the communication, let that person not try to measure how much of the speaker's manuscript is arriving intact in the hearer's brain. Rather, let that person feel the texture of the tapestry speaker and hearer weave together.[1]

[1]Thomas G. Long, The Senses of Preaching (Atlanta: John Knox, 1988), 59.

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Communication is very complicated indeed, but we can agree that at its most basic level it involves both a message and a response. William Brooks speaks of general communication:

> It includes all of the procedures by which one organism affects another. One essential characteristic of communication is that the receiving organism, animal, or person, responds. If some environmental disturbance impinges on an organism and the organism does something about it, communication has occurred; but if the stimulus is ignored by the organism, there has been no communication. The message that gets no response is not a communication.[2]

If a message that gets no response is not a communication, how much preaching could actually be classified as not a communication? Probably most of it. The preacher must remember that he or she is not automatically communicating just because they are verbalizing; it is only when the congregation responds positively that preaching can be classified as good communication.

Communication behavior may be oral verbal, written verbal, nonverbal, tonal, postural, contextual, tactile, intentional, unintentional, human, or non human.[3] For the purpose of this study we will, of course, be limiting our study to human communication with its attendant symbols, especially verbal, word symbols. Word symbols help us control and manage our world as they serve to label, categorize, and identify ideas and objects. Words are very powerful symbols and our proper or improper use of them can make us or break us. Eugene Nida comments, "By means of word symbols we frequently reveal our status in society, betray our upbringing, or reflect our education.

[2]William D. Brooks, Speech Communication (Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown, 1971), 4.

[3]Brooks, 4.

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Certain words become the badge of membership in our group, and woe to the visiting lecturer who uses the wrong word."[4]

In our attempt to define communication we must acknowledge the lack of consensus among communication theorists. Carroll Arnold and John Bowers comment, "Th1e pluralistic Western world has no agreed-on single theory of what it is to be human. ... Lacking an undisputed theory of humanity, we can have no agreed-on theory on the nature and functions of human interactions."[5]

Although philosophers and scientific theorists have reached no consenus regarding communication theory and human interaction, it has not diminished the quest for greater understanding of how humans communicate. From earliest times communication has been the concern of mankind.[6] The ancient Greek and Roman philosophers were very interested in the subject of communication. For example, Robert Oliver and Harold Zelko write:

> The great teachers of Athens gave special attention to oral communication. Isocrates founded a school for the education of speakers. Aristotle contributed The Rhetoric on the principles and practice of persuasive speaking. Plato in The Gorgias declared that without education in effective speech good men can not achieve good results for themselves nor render proper service to others. The great Romans, Cicero and Quintilian, wrote speech texts.[7]

[4]Eugene A. Nida, Message and Mission: The Communication of the Christian Faith (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), 3.

[5]Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers, Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1984), 5.

[6]See Robert T. Oliver, Culture and Communication (Springfield, Ill.: Charles Thomas, 1962), 76 – 125.

[7]Robert T. Oliver and Harold P. Zelko, Communicative Speaking and Listening (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968), 3.

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Since the beginning of the twentieth-century the field of communication has moved beyond the realm of philosophic scrutiny and become the focus of modern scientific analysis. Today, the study of communication engages the work of researchers in many fields of inquiry, including engineering, mathematics, linguistics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, political science, and religion.[8]

For the purposes of our discussion, communication will be defined as the process of human beings responding to the face-to-face, purposive, symbolic behavior, both verbal and nonverbal, of other persons. We are limiting the definition of communication in order to integrate our meaning with the field of preaching.

Communication as a Process

Communication does not happen in a vacuum or apart from interrelated events or history. Brooks says, "Speech communication is a process by which meanings are exchanged by information sent and received. When we accept the concept of process, we view events as dynamic, ongoing, ever-changing, continuous. . . everything affects everything else all the time."[9]As human beings we try to organize out data and give the data meaning, that is, we have a need to interpret. There are a number of factors that cause us to interpret things in one way or another, including past experience, assumptions about human behavior, expectations, knowledge, and personal moods.[10]

[8]Paul W. Egertson, Sacramental Rhetoric: The Relation of Preaching to Persuasion in American Lutheran Homiletics, Ph.D. Diss., School of Theology at Claremont, 1976 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1976), 11.

[9]Brooks, 5.

[10]Ronald B. Adler and George Rodman, Understanding Human Communication (Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1991), 35.

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Because communication involves a transaction between sender and receiver it cannot be static or understood in terms of individual, isolated acts. Variables such as interpersonal history, culture, and audience all contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the communication process between sender and receiver. Essentially, good communication must be seen as dialogical in nature.

Communication as a Dialogue

Because communication involves a sender, a message, a channel, and a receiver, dialogue is involved whether or not the dialogue is verbally articulated. The dialogue may, in fact, be nonverbal in nature. It may come in the form of feedback such as a frown, a quizzical look, or a smile of approval. When preaching ceases to be dialogical in nature, it ceases to be communication. Preachers must remember that at the other end of every message are people who must receive the message and apply meaning to the message in order for communication to have taken place. If the audience is not drawn into the communication process through dialoguing with the preacher, the inevitable result is that the audience will begin to dialogue at a different level. They might start whispered conversations with their neighbors or, they might begin a dialogue at an intra-personal level within their own imaginative minds. When talking to ourselves we often assume dual verbal roles, and actually dialogue with ourselves. Dialogue between the preacher and the audience must not cease for, if it does, preaching is reduced to a monologue, and communication ceases even though the preacher has not ceased verbalizing. John Stott refers to this as silent dialogue.

> Dialogical preaching. . . refers to the silent dialogue which should be developing between the preacher and the hearers. We want to provoke people to think, to answer us and to argue with us in their minds, and we

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> should maintain such a lively (though silent) dialogue with them that they find it impossible to fall asleep.[11]

Jon Eisenson, Jeffery Auer, and John Irwin recognize three specific elements of communication important to the speaker-listener relationship of which preachers involved in silent dialogue should be aware:

> 1. Individuals may play either specialized or alternating roles in the communicative process. . . sometimes acting as communicator, sometimes as listener.
>
> 2. Response from the listener is the ultimate goal of all communication.
>
> 3. Individuals respond most readily when they are highly involved in the purpose of the communication.[12]

Many pastors have a tendency to devote all of their energies toward the exegesis of the biblical text with its corresponding hermeneutic, and, in the process, forget about the audience. I am appreciative of Fred Craddock's distinction between the listeners as the audience and the listeners as the congregation, the prominent distinction being that an audience generally is not as well-known as a congregation (both interpersonally and with the minister).[13] But Craddock is quick to acknowledge, "that the general familiarity that develops between a minister and a congregation cannot be assumed to be understanding. Familiarity can blind one and prevent genuine knowledge and understanding."[14]

[11]John R.W. Stott, Between Two Worlds (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 61 – 62.

[12]Jon Eisenson, J. Jeffery Auer, and John V. Irwin, "The Psychology of Communication," in Dimensions of Communication, ed. Lee Richardson (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 63, 64.

[13]See Fred B. Craddock, Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon, 1985), 86 – 98.

[14]Craddock, Preaching, 92.

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If a pastor is remiss about the audience he or she will inevitably forget about dialoguing with the audience and thereby condemn the sermon to the drudgery of the aforementioned monologue. Craddock offers us three ways by which a minister comes to know the audience:

> 1. Formal. A preacher does not move into a ministry and expect to be consistently effective in the pulpit when he or she knows the parishioners solely by a process of gradual absorption. Initiative and intentionality are essential, if for no other reason than to break the stereotypes we bring with us. . . . A few key interviews quite soon after one's arrival in the community can hasten the beginnings of pastoral as well as pulpit effectiveness.
>
> 2. Informal. Hardly a day passes that does not provide many and varied human contacts and occasions to observe the activities and interactions of those to whom and among whom one ministers. . . . Having an understanding of the currents of a community's life. . . enables the minister to interpret the listeners to themselves.
>
> 3. Empathetic imagination. Empathetic imagination is the capacity to achieve a large measure of understanding of another person without having had that person's experiences.[15]

The preacher should do his or her best to avoid any type of interference in the verbal or silent dialogue process since interference tends to block both message and meaning. Three specific types of interference extrapolated from behavioristic learning research that contribute to a break-down in communication between the speaker and the listeners are offered by Frank Hartman.

> There are three principal factors contributing to interference: frustration, fatigue, and low motivation. The reduction of these factors is a matter of being careful to fulfill the recipient's expectations, of exceeding neither his

[15]Craddock, Preaching, 93 - 95.

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> comprehension nor his attention span, and of reinforcing him frequently for attending.[16]

Communication as an Effect

The effects of communication should be classified as those desired by the source, those desired by the receiver, and those actually obtained.[17] For the intent of this project we must ask ourselves about the relationship between audience analysis and overall effect. Our argument is that in order for communication to be successful, it must have at its foundation the notion of knowing the audience. Good content is secondary. Making the listener want to hear you is primary. Wilbur Schramm lists four conditions that must be fulfilled if the message is to have its intended effect:

> 1. The message must be so designed and delivered as to gain the attention of the intended destination.
>
> 2. The message must employ signs which refer to experience common to the source and destination, so as to get the meaning across.
>
> 3. The message must arouse personality needs in the destination and suggest some ways to meet those needs.
>
> 4. The message must suggest a way to meet those needs which is appropriate to the group situation in which the destination finds himself at the time when he is moved to make the desired response.[18]

Schramm is suggesting that the initial focus of communication is the audience, the intended destination. First, what will get the attention of the audience? This involves

[16]Frank R. Hartman, "A Behavioristic Approach to Communication: A Selective Review of Learning Theory and a Derivation of Postulates," in Dimensions of Communication, ed. Lee Richardson (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 128.

[17]Edgar Crane, Marketing Communications (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1972), 21.

[18]Wilbur Schramm, "How Communication Works," in Dimensions of Communication, ed. Lee Richardson, (Engelwood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 13.

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the availability of the message, the volume of the message, and the timing of the message, (a message given at a time when people are more receptive to hear, i.e. relaxed and unbusy).[19] Second, what does the speaker have in common with the audience? The receiver must be in tune with the sender. Schramm notes, "Therefore, in designing a message we have to be sure not only that we speak the same language as the receiver, but also that we don't conflict too directly with the way he sees and catalogues the world."[20] Third, what emotional or personality needs does the audience have? Schramm states:

> We take action because of need and toward goals. . . . The first requisite of an effective message, therefore (as every advertising man knows), is that it relate itself to one of our personality needs–the needs for security, status, belongingness, understanding, freedom from constraint, love, freedom from anxiety, and so forth. It must arouse a drive. It must make the individual feed a need or a tension which he can satisfy by action. Then the message can try to control the resulting action by suggesting what action to take.[21]

Fourth, how can the needs of the audience be met within the group situation? It is very difficult to initiate any type of change that goes against the cultural standards or rules of a group or a society. Schramm continues:

> a message is much more likely to succeed if it fits the patterns of understandings, attitudes, values and goals that a receiver has; or at least if it starts with this pattern and tries to reshape it slightly. Communication research men call this latter process "canalizing," meaning that the sender provides a channel to direct the already existing motives in the receiver. Advertising men and propagandists say it more bluntly; they say that a communicator must "start where the audience is."[22]

[19]Schramm, 13.

[20]Schramm, 14.

[21]Schramm, 14.

[22]Schramm, 15 - 16.

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The preacher must recognize that it is not his or her responsibility to motivate people. People are already motivated. This is confirmed by Sonya Hamlin when she suggests:

> The preacher's responsibility is to discover what's motivating his or her audience. If your message obviously relates to one or more of the listener's "hot buttons," you have given a primary, compelling reason for listening. You're not actually demanding that he or she give up self-involvement. You're just piggy-backing on some part of the listener's own momentum; his or her self-involvement. You're defining your message as another facet of his or her ongoing life concerns.[23]

Jeff Scott Cook suggests that we spend less time thinking about what to put in the listener's head and spend more time thinking about what's already there.[24]

The Nature of Language

Language is a collection of symbols governed by phonological, syntactic, semantic, and regulative rules, combined in various ways to create meaning.[25] Phonological rules deal with the sounds of words. Syntactic rules refer to the arrangement or structure of words in a sentence. Semantic rules determine how we respond to one another through our agreement of what a certain symbol stands for within a given context. Regulative rules help us interpret symbols within a specific context.

Symbols have meaning only in the context of agreement and, obviously, therein lies the rub. Adler and Rodman state, "There are many times when a single word has different meanings for different people. This is possible because words, being symbols,

[23]Sonya Hamlin, How to Talk so People Listen (New York: Harper & Row, 1988) 22.

[24]Jeff Scott Cook, The Elements of Speechwriting and Public Speaking (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 14.

[25]Adler and Rodman, 60.

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have no meaning in themselves."[26] The preacher must be cognizant of this dilemma. For example, is the preacher in meaningful agreement with the congregation when words are spoken such as salvation, church, God, morality, etc.? The preacher may know what he is saying, and how he is attributing meaning, but unless he is careful, he won't have a clue as to what people are hearing and how they are ascribing meaning. Symbols may have radically different meanings. Difficulties arise when we take communication for granted; when we assume what was meant was precisely what was understood.

Ronald Allen suggests that a community designs and furnishes its own world, and actually creates its own interpretation of life.[27] Meaning, then, belongs to the members of the community. Since meanings are in people and not in words we have need for regulative rules to help establish understanding—rules that allow for context or various contexts,[28] as well as paralanguage (tone of voice, rate of speech, and inflections, etc.) and other nonverbal indicators.

A number of things can happen between the speaker and the listeners if language is inappropriate or if symbols are not used carefully and thoughtfully. Should the speaker use inappropriate symbols, the possibility of communication is hindered greatly. The audience may do several things: they may stop listening as they spend their time mentally searching for possible connotations to words they do not understand; or, if

[26]Adler and Rodman, 61.

[27]Ronald J. Allen, "The Social Function of Language in Preaching" in Preaching as a Social Act: Theology and Practice, ed Arthur Van Seter (Nashville: Abingdon, 1988), 155.

[28]For examples of the various contexts of preaching see Justo L. Gonzalez and Catherine G. Gonzalez, "The Larger Context" in Preaching as a Social Act, 29 – 50.

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words are used that are above the audience's intelligence level, the audience will see themselves as ignorant and cease tracking with the speaker; or, the audience will begin to "tune-out" the speaker if the audience thinks he or she is trying to impress them rather than inform them. They might be asking, "Is the speaker trying to communicate with me or just show how smart he is?"[29]

Clyde Fant alludes to this problem when he suggests that preachers have developed two dialects which he labels "Upper Garble" and "Lower Garble." The distinctives of these two preacher dialects is worth mentioning.

Upper Garble

1. Never uses a short word when a long one would be more impressive.
2. Always uses theo-philosophic language.
3. Strives for elevated or inflated language.
4. Employs the grand manner.
5. Prizes involved reasoning.
6. Overstates when confused.
7. Loses its humanity in its divinity.

Lower Garble

1. Locates the sermon in ancient history.
2. Speaks to no one in particular about nothing in particular.
3. Lacks vividness because it never becomes involved.
4. Lacks imagination totally.
5. Vaporizes each statement into a forceless mass.[30]

It is important for the preacher to speak in the language of the people. The language must be familiar, for it is the familiar things in life that allow for "community." This is why tradition is so powerful, it gives us a sense of familiarity with those who have gone before us. If the language is familiar it will breathe and thereby be a living

[29]Hamlin, 46.

[30]Clyde E. Fant, Preaching for Today (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 148.

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language. Bible-speak, or the language of Zion, is not helpful and certainly not any more holy than normal language. According to Fant the problem of inappropriate language lies in both the "desire for quasi-divine speech. . . and the isolation of the pulpit."[31] And it is isolation that tends to produce pulpit dialect.[32]

The preacher should remember also to use vivid language, language that stimulates the senses. Craddock states, "The minister would do well to check his sentences to see if his words convey that which can be heard or seen or smelled or touched or tasted since much of the force of a sermon is dependent upon the preacher's sharing what his hearers already know."[33]

Since the nature of language demands constant care and attentiveness to rules, it is not an overstatement to suggest that a preacher needs to take language seriously. To ignore the rules of language is to become presumptuous, and presumption on the part of the speaker or listener will hinder the communication process significantly. A preacher's task is similar to the work of the Holy Spirit in Acts chapter two where we find every person hearing the word of God in his own language. Frankly, good communication, then as now, could be categorized as a miracle. I would submit, however, that since miracles are not readily at the preacher's disposal, intelligent preaching is the best we have to offer, and it certainly what we should strive to attain.

[31]Fant, 146 – 47.

[32]Fant, 147.

[33]Fred B. Craddock, As One Without Authority (Nashville: Abingdon, 1971), 93.

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CHAPTER 3

Rhetoric and Persuasion

Since its inception as an oratorical discipline beginning in fifth-century (B.C.E.) Greece, the term rhetoric has acquired many meanings (some of them quite negative). Donald Clark states that from the ancient Greek and Roman era divergent views of rhetoric appeared.

> There was the moral philosophical view of Plato, who condemned rhetoric because it seemed to him to deal with appearances, opinion, and pleasure whereas it ought to deal with reality, truth and the good life. There was the philosophical scientific view of Aristotle, who tried to see the thing as in itself it really was, who endeavored to devise a theory of rhetoric without moral praise or blame for it. There was, finally, the practical educational view of the rhetoricians from Isocrates to Cicero to Quintilian, who praised rhetoric, practiced it, and taught it as an essential attribute of the free citizen in a civilized society.[1]

When people think of rhetoric they often think initially of flowery, embellished language couched in the purposive, deceitful arrangement of words designed to persuade or manipulate an audience at all costs. Edward Corbett suggests that rhetoric is often associated with, "the notion of empty, bombastic language, of 'sound and fury, signifying nothing,' of 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.' Perhaps tucked away somewhere. . .is the notion of rhetoric as the use of language for persuasive purposes."[2] Rhetoric is

[1]Donald L. Clark, Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), 24.

[2]Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 31.

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certainly about persuasive discourse, but that alone should not condemn it since there is very little, if any, communication that is not value-laden or persuasive in nature.

Corax of Syracuse is commonly designated as the first formulator of the art of rhetoric. Certain political and social changes taking place at the time prompted him to establish some system of oral public defense. According to Corbett,

> The "art" that Corax formulated was designed to help ordinary men plead their claims in court and since no documentary evidence was available to prove their claims, they had to rely on inferential reasoning and on the general topic of probability. . . . The chief contribution that Corax made was the formula he proposed for the parts of a judicial speech–proem, narration, arguments (both confirmation and refutation), and peroration–the arrangement that becomes a staple of all later rhetorical theory.[3]

Aristotle saw rhetoric as consisting of three major modes of persuasion: ethos (the appeal of character), logos (an appeal to reason), and pathos (an appeal to the emotions). Each of the modes of persuasion may be used "exclusively, or predominantly, or we may use all three."[4] Preacher's must determine the context (subject, occasion, and audience) of their preaching and decide how they will use these modes of persuasion.

Ethos consisted of a speaker's wisdom, high character, and good will. This is a hard-won but critical commodity. Most listeners are somewhat wary of any speaker unless the speaker is known to them quite well. All speakers not only have to establish credibility with an audience, they must keep it as well. The image of the speaker must be upheld throughout the entire discourse. "The effect of the ethical appeal might very well be destroyed by a single lapse from good sense, good will, or moral integrity."[5] If

[3]Corbett, 595.

[4]Corbett, 50.

[5]Corbett, 95.

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that should happen the persuasion process is abruptly halted. In the words of Sonya Hamlin:

> Instinctively, we have always been wary of others, needing to know what their intentions are and what to expect before we let them in. We're still wary of others today. When someone says, "Give me the power to tell you, to sell you, to hold sway while you listen," our instincts are still alert. We're still asking: "Friend or foe?," "Are you for me?," "Useful to me?," "Trustworthy?," "What happens if I let you in?" To answer, we test.[6]

Hopefully, the preacher passes the test given by the audience. But, because the test is administered weekly, there's little room for error.

Carl Hovland, Irving Janis, and Harold Kelley comment on ways in which people possessing ethos become the credible witnesses in support of an argument or assertion:

> The effectiveness of communication is commonly assumed to depend to a considerable extent upon who delivers it. Governmental agencies take great pains to have their statements presented to Congress by the most acceptable advocates. Backyard gossips liberally sprinkle the names of respectable sources throughout their rumors. The debater, the author of scientific articles, and the news columnist all bolster their contentions with quotations from figures with prestige.[7]

Credibility is a critical factor in persuasion. It is unfortunate, yet true, that preachers may need months and even years to build credibility, but that he or she can lose it in an instant. One need only to keep abreast with the current church scene to be aware of the many preachers whose ministries or empires have fallen because of various improprieties and the resultant loss of ethos. Because of recent scandals, the character of the preacher may well be the single, greatest factor in his or her ability to persuade an audience. If one loses credibility, the worth given to the speaker along with the

[6]Hamlin, 26.

[7]Carl I. Hovland, Irving L. Janis and Harold H. Kelly, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 19.

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acceptance of the statements, is diminished. We might say the speaker becomes worth less.

Ethos is ethical when it reveals the honest, true character of the speaker. Deliberate attempts to build up one's character (when it is a distortion) for the purpose of persuading is unethical. The fact is, you either have the goods or you do not. And it does not take congregations very long to discover your real intentions.

Logos, or logic, has been described as the ability to think, write, or speak in a clear and organized fashion. To the ancient rhetors, "logos referred to the ideas, structure, and logic of a speech evaluated in terms of their persuasive force."[8] Aristotle spoke of rhetoric as being an offshoot or a counterpart of logic. It was perfectly alright for a speaker to employ logic in a persuasive discourse, but logic was viewed as only one of the means in all the available means of persuasion. One would think that reason alone would be convincing, but "rhetoricians were realistic enough to recognize that men are creatures of passion and of will as well as of intellect."[9]

Rhetorical argument and persuasion are closely connected in the area of communication. Argument, for the most part, is based on logic. Persuasion, however, is not regarded as a logical event; it is understood more as a psychological event "that begins with the persuader's act of identification and ends with the persuadee's act of assent."[10] The speaker's use of logic does not necessarily translate to the audience the

[8]Burton L. Mack, Rhetoric and the New Testament (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 36.

[9]Corbett, 93.

[10]Brooks and Warren, 181.

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speaker's empathy with them. Leander Keck is wary of sermons that offer the audience only rational truth.

> The clearly wrought sermon seems to imply that truth is rational, consistent, and reducible to a limited number of points. This, however, seems to confer an aura of unreality to the sermon. The clearer and simpler the sermon the more artificial it may seem. This is because, instinctively, many persons believe that truth is glimpsed momentarily and in fragments, that it lacks symmetry, that it is awkward and angular as it breaks through to us.[11]

When using logical arguments the preacher should be keenly aware of the educational level of the audience. In experiments done on mass communication in the 1940s it was demonstrated that people with different educational levels were persuaded through significantly different means.[12] It was demonstrated that persons with high intelligence will tend--mainly because of their ability to draw valid inferences--to be more influenced than those with low intellectual ability when exposed to persuasive communications which rely on impressive logical arguments. The same persons--because of their superior critical ability--were less influenced than those with low intelligence when exposed to persuasive communication which relied primarily on unsupported generalities or false, illogical, irrelevant argumentation.[13]

The presentation of rational truth may cause people to think in a rational way, but mere thinking, be it rational or irrational, does not always translate into action. This is the primary reason why advertising has moved away from commercials that emphasize logic or reason.

[11]Leander E. Keck, The Bible in the Pulpit: The Renewal of Biblical Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), 39.

[12]See Carl I. Hovland, A. A. Lumsdaine and F. D. Sheffield, Experiments on Mass Communication (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), 107 - 08.

[13]Hovland, Lumsdaine and Sheffield, 183.

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Another reason advertisers don't emphasize logic is that logic is usually associated with argument, and argument is usually associated with conflict. Brooks and Warren suggest, "Identification, not conflict, is what the persuader seeks." They quote Kenneth Burke in A Grammar of Motives, "You persuade a man only in so far as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, and idea, identifying you ways with his."[14]

Without being too critical of argument, we must view identification as the initial task of the preacher. It is alarming, however, to discover how many preachers still think their mission in life is to foster conflict and argument. A well-conceived argument may arrive at a point of truth (which is indeed noble), but the preacher must look beyond a point of truth; he or she must strive for the assent of the audience. It is at the point of assent that persuasion has occurred.

Although the use of logos is not the best way to persuade, we must not neglect its proper use. If we do not study logos we are apt to fall into the use generalizations, hyperbole, improper either-or propositions, self-contradiction, *non sequiturs*, and other forms of faulty argument.[15]

Logos is ethical when it is not associated with "falsification, communication barriers, propaganda devices, confusion of facts with inference, or concealment of purpose, organization, or institution."[16] The persuader must not lie to the audience nor conceal his or her intentions. McLaughlin states:

[14]Brooks and Warren, 178.

[15]Sweazey, 134.

[16]Raymond W. McLaughlin, The Ethics of Persuasive Preaching (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 76 - 77.

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> Most rhetoricians insist that a persuader "lay his cards on the table" early in the communication. This gives the listener a fighting chance to sort out the speaker's bias, angle, or personal stake in his persuasive talk. The responsible preacher will not conceal his purpose or organization for unethical reasons. This does not mean that purpose may not be approached indirectly as a rhetorical device of surprise, but only that it should be done within ethical bounds.[17]

Aristotle's third mode of persuasion is pathos, or an appeal to the emotions. It is not uncommon for people to be somewhat sheepish about the fact that they are moved by emotion. This uneasy feeling that there is something undignified about being stirred to action through the emotions is usually the result of our having done something regrettable during emotional stress.[18] Corbett attempts to put us more at ease with our emotions when he states:

> There is nothing necessarily reprehensible about being moved to action through our emotions; in fact, it is perfectly normal. Since it is our will ultimately that moves us to action and since the emotions have a powerful influence on the will, many of our actions are prompted by the stimulus of our emotions.[19]

Emotional appeals work best through images and descriptions. It is no small wonder that advertising firms use images to persuade people to buy. Most of Madison Avenue's emotional appeals use small children or family settings as their subject. The preacher should use whatever is natural. One cannot command emotion; it must be brought forth through the use of images and descriptions.[20]

[17]McLaughlin, 77 – 78.

[18]Corbett, 99.

[19]Corbett, 99.

[20]Corbett, 107.

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In one of the earliest attempts at psychology,[21] Aristotle suggests that we must know three things about emotions if we wish to arouse them in others: (1) their nature; (2) their object, that is, the kind of people toward whom we experience the emotion; (3) and their exciting causes.[22] Aristotle also provided analysis of human emotions and their opposites, such as love and hate, fear and courage, shame and shamelessness.[23] Aristotle analyzed other things as well. McLaughlin writes, "He studied the characteristics of people and surveyed the traits usually observed in people of social prominence, wealth, power, and good fortune."[24] If the preacher will study this commonsense approach to the psychology of emotions he or she will be considerably more effective in the art of persuasion.

Pathos is the mode of persuasion that generally comes under the greatest attack when discussing ethical approaches of persuasion. Persuasion has often been associated with unscrupulous politicians and revivalists "using cheap sentimentalism to play upon the emotions of their listeners."[25] Emotion has dangerous connotations when applied to preaching.[26] It is often associated with the kind of emotionalism found in Pentecostal churches which appears to be little more than hysteria and pandemonium. From my experience with Pentecostalism I found that many people were looking for a zap or a spiritual lobotomy rather than for a gradual transformation of life and character. The

[21]Corbett, 104.

[22]Corbett, 104.

[23]McLaughlin, 81.

[24]McLaughlin, 81.

[25]Sleeth, 9.

[26]Sleeth, 57.

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tendency of an unethical emotional appeal is to offer people a quick fix, through instant gratification. The use of an emotional appeal remains ethical when it doesn't intentionally try to subvert or bypass rational thought and promise quick, easy answers to the problems of life.

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CHAPTER 4

Learning From Marketing and Advertising

Persuasion through advertising has become one of the dominant forces in twentieth-century America. Persuasive messages confront us daily through a variety of mediums of communication such as television, radio, billboards, newspapers, magazines, and telephone books. These represent some of the common means wherein the tendrils of advertising weave their way into our conscious and subconscious minds in order to persuade us to make an action decision. "Advertising is always a battle of psychological wits. It wants us to do something. It wants us to buy. . . its success lies in its effects on our decision making."[1] John O'Shaughnessy confirms this when he says, "Buying is a purposive activity, motivated and directed by the belief that the consequences of buying make life that much happier."[2]

I would submit that the ultimate goal of advertising is the same as the ultimate goal of preaching: to persuade the audience to make an action decision in favor of the thing being offered. Both advertising and preaching offer the audience notions of hope, expectancy, joy, fulfillment, satisfaction, control, and a change in the status quo. O'Shaughnessy notes, "Consumers are sensitive to contrasts in the human condition (e.g., being healthy versus being ill). The more agreeable polar positions reflect a vision of the

[1]Carol Moog, Are They Selling Her Lips? (New York: William Morrow, 1990), 222.

[2]John O'Shaughnessy, Why People Buy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 9.

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good life and consumers try to track this vision in their pattern of purchases."[3] Both also attempt to change the relative importance the person attaches to the component of the good life relating to the product offered.

Furthermore, both preacher and advertiser need to somehow measure the results of their communication. Because of the variety of an audience's response to a communicative act, this is rarely an easy task. But the preacher should be relieved somewhat by knowing that he or she does not need a massive research staff to make some discoveries about the effectiveness of communication. Often all one needs is good intuitive sense. Thomas Robertson, Joan Zielinski, and Scott Ward note:

> Advertising messages are extremely complex stimuli–each is a "Gestalt" or overall impression of source, message, and advertiser, as well as many other variables, such as tone and connotations evoked by pictures, words, and format of advertising. Making things even more complex, different consumers may have widely varying reactions to the same ad.... Little wonder, then, that advertising copywriters have often been guided by intuitive assessments of effective advertising techniques, rather than by systematic empirical research.[4]

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss some of the effective persuasion techniques used by the advertising industry and then to state whether or not those techniques offer viable options for contemporary preaching.

David Ogilvy does not regard advertising as entertainment or an art form, but as a medium of information when he says, "When I write an advertisement, I don't want you to tell me that you find it 'creative.' I want you to find it so interesting that you buy the

[3]O'Shaughnessy, 22.

[4]Thomas Robertson, Joan Zielinski and Scott Ward, Consumer Behavior (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1984), 225.

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product."[5] Ogilvy offers a number of helpful suggestions based upon his years of experience in the advertising industry. I will list a few of them and comment briefly, in brackets, about their relationship to the task of preaching:

1. Don't be a copy-cat. [Be original, creative.]
2. Give the facts. [Tell the truth.]
3. You cannot bore people into buying. [Be interesting.]
4. Be well-mannered, but don't clown. [Avoid foolishness.]
5. Make your advertising contemporary. [Be current, real.]
6. If you're lucky enough to write a good advertisement, repeat it until it stops pulling. [Use what works.]
7. Never write an advertisement that you would not want your own family to read. [The need for self-assessment.]
8. Assess the image and the brand. [Use of image.][6]

The ultimate goal of preaching is to get the congregation to buy-in to what's being offered from the pulpit, to move people from point A to point B. Unfortunately, preachers normally hear things like, "Thank you for the message," or "Your sermon was so creative," or "My what a lovely sermon." All of these comments may be quite sincere, but we must not let traditional-social comments be the mark of success. The mark of a truly effective sermon is that it changes people (at some point in time) for the better. The answer to the question, "Was it an effective sermon?," is, "Time will tell." Time will tell whether or not the message was indeed persuasive. At this point it is appropriate to discuss some of the attributes of a persuader/preacher.

[5]David Ogilvy, Ogilvy on Advertising (New York: Crown, 1984), 103.

[6]David Ogilvy, Confessions of an Advertising Man (New York: Atheneum, 1964), 46.

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Attributes of a Persuader

Zig Ziglar gives some help at this point when he discusses the ingredients of a good salesperson:

> (1) A good professional is a student. He clearly understands that school is never out for him. He studies his prospects, studies his company literature, and studies the art of persuasion,
>
> (2) The professional is an optimist. He looks on the bright side of every aspect of life,
>
> (3).The professional is adaptable. If the techniques and methods he is using are getting desirable results, he will stay with them. But he abandons things that don't work. He is aware that principles do not change, but procedures do,
>
> (4) He sets internal standards for performance. He has goals which he works on daily. In the final analysis he understands that his career will depend on what he does with what he knows, not just on what he knows,
>
> (5) He is skilled at communicating and reading the prospect's communication back to him. He knows how to turn the valve one inch at a time until its open or closed,
>
> (6) He knows that rarely are views changed in one conversation, and
>
> (7) He is a builder and not a destroyer. He builds his fellow salespeople, his company, and his community.[7]

Does the preacher do the work of a student and study his or her congregation? At a marketing and advertising level Schwerin and Newell believe audience analysis to be critical if one is trying to persuade.

> All persuasion is based on a thorough understanding of consumers and their needs.... Consumers' problems do not combust spontaneously; they have causes. What's more, those causes are constantly shifting in shape and

[7]Zig Ziglar, Secrets of Closing the Sale (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1984), 160 – 71.

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> relative urgency; so the nature and importance of the problems change along with them.[8]

Voluminous amounts of marketing research are done annually and are quite accessible through the public library system. Those who preach should be aware of the results of such research. Appendix B of this project includes some samples of research done in the Puget Sound area of Washington State compiled from both the 1988-89 and 1990-91 Tacoma Morning News Tribune Market Profile. The market profiles contain household demographics, personal demographics, specific-area demographics, consumer summaries, and selected Tacoma market profiles. More importantly, however, is the fact that by comparing the two issues definite areas of change (i.e., growth or decline) can be seen that have happened within a year. For example, the profile on working women/home owners reveals that within one year the number of divorced or separated women rose dramatically and that more women are entering the work force. Might analysis of these figures not affect the way in which a preacher perceives the needs of the audience? And subsequently, when an audience is no longer comprised of the typical nuclear family, shouldn't preaching about the family reflect that change? Of course, preaching should and must reflect those kinds of changes in order to be relevant.

By studying market research preachers can learn much about their current congregation and how to attract new members to the congregation. A congregation intending to promote their church through some type of media campaign should have some idea as to the future effects of the campaign. Perhaps the demographics of an area won't allow for success. O'Shaughnessy states, "Marketing research knows that if a firm

[8]Schwerin and Newell, 29.

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finds a steadily declining market, it should check for changes in lifestyle (e.g. more working mothers) that might make the decline inevitable regardless of promotion."[9]

What we learn about income levels, recreational preferences, population of men, women, and children in a given area, consumer choices, number of working men, number of working women, house-buyers, apartment dwellers, etc., can inform as to both what we can and cannot do effectively. For example, this kind of general knowledge is invaluable when it comes to designing a persuasive, motivating discourse for a congregation initiating a church-growth campaign. One may have to talk the congregation out of a certain course of action before one can persuade them to the proper course of action.

Is the preacher optimistic? Is the preacher adaptable? Will he or she stick with things that work and abandon things that do not work? Does the preacher set goals of communication? Does the preacher care about congregational feedback? Does the preacher build-up or destroy his or her congregation and community? These are all questions vital to the effectiveness of preaching. Furthermore, a preacher's solid grasp of the aforementioned attributes of a persuader should help lay the foundation for audience analysis.

Psychological Advertising

William Myers suggests that the population in general can be divided into four groups: Belongers, Emulators, Emulator-Achievers, and Societally Conscious Achievers. Belongers need self-esteem and togetherness, emulators need self-confidence, emulator-

[9]O'Shaughnessy, 23.

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achievers respond to status, and societally conscious achievers react to individualism.[10] Likewise, the preacher needs to be aware of his or her audience in terms of personality and psychological need. What persuades one person will scarcely persuade another. The preacher must use diverse methods of persuasion in order to reach the entire congregation with his or her appeals. As in the days of the classical rhetors, knowing your audience is a major factor when considering the strategy of contemporary advertising.

A large percentage of consumer purchases are based on perceptions, on images. Millions of folks are cruising around in Nissans, Toyotas, and Subarus today because they were influenced by television commercials that portrayed these cars as practical but spiffy driving machines. The image was fun and adventure—a bold and personalized driving experience.[11]

At the same time, Chevrolet was trying to sell an "Americana" image of the family in the station-wagon. It had considerably fewer takers. Contemporary preachers should take note of the concept of images and imagery as useful tools in communication.

Advertising Techniques Applicable to Preaching

Humor

Conventional wisdom has always held that people buy products because they believe them to be nutritious, or labor-saving, or a good value for money—not because the manufacturer tells jokes on television. Claude Hopkins, the father of modern

[10]William Myers, The Image Makers (New York: Random House, Times Books, 1984), 53.

[11]Myers, 86.

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advertising, thundered, "People don't buy from clowns."[12] That was probably true fifty years ago, but it is not true today. The use of humor in advertising has proven quite effective, especially if the nation is in a good mood. Humor is more effective when the economy is on the rise and when peace prevails in the land. Myers confirms this when writes:

> The offbeat commercials that were so popular in the 1960s left Ad Alley in the lurch during the early 1970s. Those were the years when the public lost its sense of humor. People were in no laughing mood as they were forced to tighten their belts and confront a new era of limits. This consumer backlash spelled trouble for Madison Avenue. It became obvious to clients that the advertising industry had lost its rapport with Americans and was no longer capable of persuading them to acquire goods and services.[13]

This could not have been more graphically demonstrated when during the 1991 Superbowl both Pepsi and Coca-Cola decided to drop their light-hearted advertisements in deference to the war in the Middle-east between the United States and Iraq. Both cola companies exchanged humor with sensitivity that said, "We care." Of course, after the war both cola companies returned to lighter, funnier advertising. Humor sells, but the timing and context must be right.

If the timing and context are right, the use of humor (not jokes) in sermons can be very effective. All people carry burdens and dilemmas of one sort or another that call for some degree of comic-relief. Our society is able, on the whole, to laugh at itself now more than it could fifty years ago. Even people in the church are learning how to take God seriously without taking themselves too seriously.

[12]Quoted in Ogilvy, Ogilvy on Advertising, 103.

[13]Myers, 42.

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Old homiletic textbooks used to disparage the use of humor in a sermon because of the seriousness of the biblical message. David Buttrick alludes to this when he discusses humorous introductions.

> The problem of humor slipped into introductions is twofold: (1) The humor is almost always disconnected with the subject matter. Therefore, after a funny, preachers will probably have to design a second introduction to refocus a congregation. (2) While there may be passages of scripture that are hilarious, the gospel is ultimately serious. . . .[14]

Yet Buttrick does not disapprove of humor altogether. He sanctions humor if a sermon requires a hermeneutical orientation of joy and laughter.[15] He offers two additional rules, "(1) Congregations should laugh only when you want them to laugh, and have good reason for their bemusement; and (2) If you are a naturally funny person, your problem is control; if you are not a naturally funny person, do not try!"[16] Essentially, if humor is not contrived or mechanical it is extremely effective as part of the communication and persuasion process. Sweazey lists ten reasons why preachers should use humor in their sermons:

> 1. Sermons need humor in order to reveal truth. Laughter is the best possible unveiler of the make-believe fantasies to which people can become devoted.
>
> 2. We need humor in church to save us from fanaticism and intolerance.
>
> 3. Humor in preaching helps keep people aware of the incongruity of their pretensions.
>
> 4. The ability to see the absurd as comic is the cure for melancholy.

[14]David Buttrick, Homiletic: Moves and Structures (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 95.

[15]Buttrick, 95.

[16]Buttrick, 147.

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5. We need humor because a church service ought to be therapeutic.

6. Humor gives people a way of dealing with affliction.

7. Humor is a delight we are to enjoy with gratitude as God's good gift.

8. Humor can unify a congregation.

9. Sermons need humor to relax the strain of listening.

10. Humor can help people accept what might be hard to take.

Testimonials

A product sells if a loyal user of the product testifies to its virtues.[17] This is a good method for the preacher if, in fact, the preacher can testify to the reward received for following the proper course of action. Schwerin and Newell note:

> The underlying purpose of most communication is to promote a sense of identity, however transitory, between the sender and the receiver of the message. Since most people's customary language is structured around the "you and I" form, marketers start out with the odds in their favor if they think in that same way. Consider the expressions that Edwin Newman and other guardians of the purity of the mother tongue attack as debasing civilized discourse: "I mean" and "you know." Without doubt these phrases reflect insecurity and poverty of thought. Yet looked at from another angle they express a need to establish contact.[18]

It is important if the preacher can testify that one of the members of the congregation benefited from the same course of action. It is usually more effective when the testimonial comes from a layperson or nonprofessional (notice all of the advertisements with "person on the street" taste tests, etc.). The testimony time was quite effective years ago within the Pentecostal denominations and it is still viable today.

[17]Ogilvy, Ogilvy on Advertising, 104.

[18]Schwerin and Newell, 26.

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People want to know more than whether or not a product will work; they want to know whether or not the product will work for them—and whether or not it will it work for them now. Brand loyalty is constantly changing as consumers ask not, "What have you done for me lately?" but, "What are you doing for me now?"' Board chairman Edward Harness of Procter & Gamble noted recently that Tide, still by far the leading powder detergent, has undergone fifty-five significant product changes in the first twenty-nine years of existence.[19] This writer submits that just as secular products fade and die without change, churches also fade and die if they do not change.

Problem Solving

This technique is as old as television. You show the viewer a problem with which he or she is familiar, and then you show how your product can solve it.[20] Sermons should be brave enough to state real problems, problems to which people can relate, i.e., financial problems, relational problems, marriage problems, vocational problems, and internal problems such as shame, guilt, low self-esteem, abuse, etc.

Preachers, like advertisers must ask themselves, "What's really bothering people, and how can the trouble spot be diminished?" Henry Mitchell suggests that there is too little concern discovering people's deepest needs: "Preaching must speak to the human condition. However clever an idea, if it does not speak to real need it is useless."[21] Craddock states, "Preaching should touch life at the level of its deepest needs. . . ."[22] Al

[19]Schwerin and Newell, 20.

[20]Ogilvy, Ogilvy on Advertising, 108.

[21]Henry Mitchell, The Recovery of Preaching (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 142.

[22]Craddock, Preaching, 95.

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Ries and Jack Trout agree, "To be successful today, you must touch base with reality. And the reality that really counts is what's already in the person's mind.[23] This involves information gathering.

For example, advertising researchers realized that although Americans during the 1970s seemed bitter and hostile–in no mood to purchase–they could still be won over to Ad Alley.[24] Extensive videotaped interviews with consumers revealed how worried and depressed they were about the direction their lives were taking. After Vietnam, Watergate, the Arab oil crisis, and the youth revolt, people felt their country was falling apart, and government, business, and religious leaders seemed unable to improve matters. Some advertisers sensed an opportunity. If Madison Avenue could find out what was bothering people and then create commercials that helped to assuage the public's troubles, then the grateful nation would start buying again.[25]

The advertising moguls tried to gain an understanding of how the average citizen saw the world through his own eyes. This was accomplished through extensive information gathering. If the real problems could be discovered, real solutions could be offered. Schwerin and Newell state that, "the marketer must persuade the public that the product continues to offer the appropriate solution to current needs; for needs change, sometimes these days with breathtaking rapidity.[26] In much the same manner the preacher must remain current with the needs of the congregation.

[23]Al Ries and Jack Trout, Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind (1981; reprint, New York: Warner Books, 1982), 5.

[24]Myers, 49.

[25]Myers, 47.

[26]Schwerin and Newell, 20.

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Joseph Plummer, who had studied mass-communication theory while getting his Ph.D. at Ohio State, believed that people are very much drawn to real-life situations such as television programs that mirror the reality of daily dilemmas. In his opinion, the main reason for the popularity of M*A*S*H and All in the Family was that Hawkeye and Archie Bunker were able to cope with a host of easily recognizable problems each week.[27] It is equally significant that the problems are dealt with in a humorous vein. Likewise, a sermon needs a good dose of reality; it should deal with real problems. It is unfortunate that many sermons deal with abstract problems and with questions nobody is asking. With abstract problems come abstract solutions which are not really solutions at all.

Regarding problems and their solutions, all preachers should ask the following three questions adapted from Schwerin and Newell: "1) Is the problem important?, 2) Does the problem occur frequently?, and 3) Has the solution to the problem been preempted by some existing solution or service?"[28]

Benefits First, Then Features

A feature is something that's built into a product or service. A benefit is a desirable result the feature produces. Most people do not buy products or services; they buy the benefits those products provide. Hence, the primary role of an advertiser or salesperson is to analyze the features of the product or service and translate them into benefits that fill the needs of an individual.[29] For instance, a hunting coat may have three features: It

[27]Cited in Myers, 49.

[28]Schwerin and Newell, 49.

[29]Porter Henry, Secrets of the Master Sellers (New York: AMACOM, 1987), 117.

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could be water-repellent, fleece-lined, and bright red. The features will not, however, sell the coat–but the benefits will. Because the coat is water-repellent it will keep you dry (benefit number one). Because it is fleece-lined it will "keep you warm" (benefit number two). And because it is bright red it may keep you alive since other hunters will not fire at you (benefit number three).

Sermons are often engorged with features such as doctrine, dogma, and religious words exquisitely defined. Yet, without elaboration about the benefits, of such words, the features of the words are reduced to the arid, barren desert of mere definition. The parishioner is constantly asking, "How will the features described in your sermon benefit me?" The preacher must believe that his or her message offers the best solution to the problem, and that competing messages which vie for the audience's attention do not offer a comparable solution.

News

Products, like human beings, attract most attention when they are first born.[30] Newness always has its own appeal. For an old product, you can create news by advertising a new way to use it. In new product development most firms try to come up with novel ways of promoting their product. This should be true of sermons as well. Preachers face the arduous task of delivering sermons to people who have heard it all before. Sermons should be creative in telling old stories in a way that makes them sound new. Stories that a congregation has heard since childhood can be put into new forms such as analogy or parable. The message may be the same, it is the presentation of the message that is different. The preacher's task is to make old news sound new. Perhaps

[30]Ogilvy, Ogilvy on Advertising, 109.

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more challenging is this: Are preachers willing to let the congregation discover new uses for the old news? Often we find marketers allowing consumers the privilege of defining the product. "Kleenex tissues were originally marketed for use to remove cold cream from women's faces without messing up towels. Only after Kimberly-Clark began getting many letters saying the product was a terrific substitute for handkerchiefs was it advertised for the latter purpose."[31]

Attainability

The product offered must be attainable. As a culture changes we must be aware of the effects of the changes and how they relate to communication. For example, twenty years ago we could speak of categories such as the nuclear family. Twenty years ago advertisers would try to sell something to assist the family and, likewise, preachers would structure sermons around the family, with the father as the breadwinner and the mother as the bread buyer. Today this is not acceptable, not because we have anything against the nuclear family, but because that type of family scarcely exists anymore. Schwerin and Newell note: "In fact, the word family has virtually disappeared from the internal vocabulary of marketing and has been replaced by household. The truth is that family no longer adequately describes the many ways people are living or not living together these days. The traditional nuclear family has become for many an unattainable goal."[32]

So it's good-bye to family and hello to household because household is more attainable than family. In similar fashion marketers have been unable to define their primary targets in the customary, stereotypical ways of time past. Similarly, preachers

[31]Schwerin and Newell, 67.

[32]Schwerin and Newell, 40.

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must learn to adapt to change by keeping up with the times and shedding stereotypical images of both culture and congregation.

Another example involves gender. It was only during the last decade that Madison Avenue awakened to the place of women in the American scene. They had dichotomized females as either career oriented or home oriented; the truth of the matter being that most women were both.[33]

Every preacher should study surveys such as Daniel Yankelovich's annual nationwide surveys found in the Yankelovich Monitor wherein he discusses societal values, lifestyles changes, and cultural trends. In addition, preachers should be familiar with other types of books that predict trends; books such as Megatrends, Megatrends 2000, and American Renaissance: Our Life at the Turn of the 21st Century. Preachers should avoid being too caught up in their own religious view of eschatology to listen to secular voices. Schwerin and Newell understand the importance of being aware of future trends: "The successful marketer must figuratively wear bifocals. Besides keeping a close eye on the present, he or she has to make reasonable guesses about what is most likely to happen a year, two years, a decade hence, for many daily decisions have far-reaching consequences. Right decisions depend on correct judgment of what tomorrow will bring."[34]

Change is inevitable, yet we must remember that in the midst of change there are constants. We are not asking the preacher to abandon his or her constants. We are only asking that he or she give the constants a new face, a new style, a new presentation which offers reality and attainability for the audience. The marketing and advertising industry

[33]Myers, 127 - 47.

[34]Schwerin and Newell, 226.

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recognize that if a firm's offering is to be quickly accepted, it must be designed to fit the consumer's lifestyle.[35]

Emotion

Commercials with a large content of nostalgia, charm and even sentimentality can be enormously effective.[36] Logic makes people think, but it is emotion that makes them act. Commercials that use emotion usually involve small children or a sense of family. Although it is difficult to measure the relationship between emotion and why people buy, people do respond to pathos. Sweazey notes, "Readily interesting emotions are attached to personal interests–greed, pleasure, safety, popularity, success–as advertisers well know."[37]

The arousing of emotions during the preaching act has, over the last decade, come under severe criticism due to its tendency to get out of control. As is most often the case when an extreme is discovered we have a tendency to quench it by moving to another extreme. We could call this the phenomena of the pendulum-swing, such as when a clock pendulum swings to the left extreme and then to the right extreme. Balance is found only in the middle of the swing. Although we do not approve of hyper-emotionalism, we must not let the pendulum swing from hyper-emotionalism to passionless rigidity, as has been the case of a number of mainline denominations during the twentieth century.

[35]O'Shaughnessy, 23.

[36]Ogilvy, Ogilvy on Advertising, 110.

[37]Sweazey, 136.

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Sweazey tells us that an appeal to the emotions has been one of the trademarks of preaching since the early church: "Thomas Aquinas, following Augustine, gave the preacher three tasks: to instruct the intelligence, to kindle the emotions, and to form the will. Emotion is life's driving power. Making people feel more deeply about what they already know is an essential goal of preaching. Life depends not only on what people believe, but on how they believe."[38]

Tugging at the heart-strings is quite effective, but the preacher must proceed with caution since the line between motivation and manipulation becomes exceedingly small when dealing with emotions. How can a preacher know the difference? Henry Mitchell offers us this advice.

> Our first understanding is to practice an irrevocable commitment to high purpose, and to the use of appeals directed to the highest emotions.... Powerful emotional impact should be viewed in the same way one views dynamite. It can be destructive when not used for the purposes for which it was made. The discouragement of low emotions, the development of love and other high emotions, the commitment of the will of persons to the will of God, and the healing of hearers in the need of emotional and spiritual health–all these demand that sermons have emotional impact harnessed to these high purposes.[39]

Since human beings are by nature emotional beings, preachers should not disdain the use of emotion when they preach. But the emotion must be used to help people discover truth by themselves. Craddock suggests that it is the right of a congregation to arrive at conclusion of their own.[40] If emotion helps people decide what to do for

[38]Sweazey, 22.

[39]Henry H. Mitchell, Celebration and Experience in Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), 32.

[40]Craddock, As One Without Authority, Chap. 4.

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themselves, it is noble. If emotion is used as a manipulative gimmick to get people to have a sudden change-of-heart, its use is reduced to both unethical and self-defeating purposes. The unethical use of emotion may produce temporary change; but as soon as the emotions come under control and the rational mind takes over, the temporary, emotion-laden change-of-heart can easily be forgotten and just as easily reversed. If this be the case neither preacher nor parishioner has acquired anything of lasting value.

Closing

According to Porter Henry, salespeople are quite aware that "any conversation with a prospective buyer that does not end with at least one attempt to close the sale is not a sales call, it's a social visit."[41] Many sermons conclude but do not close; hence, they fall into the category of a social visit rather than a persuasive discourse. Howard Hendriks comments on the need for a well-thought-out conclusion:

> You also need a conclusion. This is often the least prepared part of most sermons and messages. How often I've heard a preacher near the end of his sermon, and I can see him circling the field, looking for a runway to lay that baby down. He then says something like, "Lastly, and in conclusion, or may God bless this truth to your hearts," which being interpreted means, "I don't have a clue as to how to finish this thing off." [42]

There are a number of reasons for the lack of a proper closing. Sweazey suggests two such reasons: "The minister prepares it when he is the most tired, and the congregation hears it when they are most tired."[43] Perhaps the solution to this dilemma

[41]Henry, 208.

[42]Howard G. Hendriks, Teaching to Change Lives (Portland: Multnomah, 1987), 109.

[43]Sweazey, 100.

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is to prepare the conclusion first, and build the introduction and body of the message around it.

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CHAPTER 5

Summary and Conclusions

Someone once defined sermons as the fine art of talking in somebody else's sleep. The distressed soul who was prompted to describe sermons in that fashion was, more than likely, justified in his assessment, having probably endured his share of Sunday morning snoozes. Through the ritual of sermonizing, congregations have had to endure countless hours of monologues that scarcely relate to life in the real world. Twentieth-century congregations can, however, rest assured that poor preaching is not an isolated phenomena or the judgment of God upon their generation—the criticism of preaching is as old as the first-century.[1] Clyde Fant says, "No part of the worship of the church has been so generously and ecumenically roasted as preaching, but likewise no aspect of its worship has been so generally and ecumenically practiced."[2] So the congregation sits, week after week, in a love-hate relationship, captives of pulpit verbiage—an enslaved people inundated with words, yet somehow sensing a need to be listening. The complaint of Eliza Doolittle to her two suitors in My Fair Lady could probably be adapted for most congregations, "Words, words, words. . . is that all you blighters can do? Don't talk of stars burning above; if you're in love, show me."

People have a tendency to distrust words, and for the preacher this becomes a significant problem since words are what people come to hear Sunday after Sunday.

[1]For a brief history regarding the criticism of preaching see pages 2 – 12 of Preaching for Today by Clyde E. Fant.

[2]Fant, 1.

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The preacher has no other equipment with which to cause change, growth, and development within a congregation (certainly not equipment which can be used so consistently and directly). When considering the complexities of human communication, to think that a preacher's arsenal contains only words is frightening indeed. Sweazey wonders whether or not so much listening is all that beneficial when he says, "Christianity is not something you talk about, it is something you do. Sitting through sermons can become the major Christian activity. With most of us being drowned by words—words on paper, words from radios, and talk shows, and commentators—the thought of all the talking that goes on in church may be disquieting."[3]

Yet Sweazey is very much in favor of words, and correct in his assessment when he justifies the use of words when they are compared over and against Christian deeds. "The contrast of words with deeds, however, is a false one. Words are deeds. The ancient Greeks had the saying, 'By words alone are lives of mortals swayed.' The talkers are the doers, if what they talk about is important. The greatest doer of all was called 'the Word.'"[4]

I can agree with Sweazey that if what preachers talk about is important to them, they will also do the things of which they speak. The most successful salespeople believe in their product to the extent that, if possible, they use it themselves. Persuading people to buy is a difficult business requiring intelligence and resourcefulness, but it helps greatly if the product being sold is worthy of the person's efforts, and, especially, if the person selling is convinced of the positive attributes of the product. It is as hard for salespeople

[3]Sweazey, 3.

[4]Sweazey, 3

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to sell a product they don't believe in as it is for a preacher to sell a Christian life he or she does not believe in.

One of the purposes of this project has been to point out the fact that both preachers and advertisers have a product to sell. This may sound sacrilegious to some, but frankly, that is exactly how it is. Preacher's have a product to sell be it God, Christ, salvation, social concern, human rights, the environment, etc., and if they're not convinced about the product, then why preach at all?

Up to this point in the project I have refrained from speaking about my personal experiences as a preacher, but I think it helpful at this time to interject thoughts from my experience regarding two areas of importance for the preacher: (1) personal convictions, and (2) the relationship of word and deed.

First, I have deep convictions about God and God's Word. I can say like the Apostle Paul, "I am persuaded." I am persuaded to the degree that in some things I am quite dogmatic. Lest I sound arrogant and presumptuous regarding this matter, let me remind the reader that although dogmatic statements are not in vogue in many mainline denominational circles during our current era, expressions of certainty present the spirit of Christ and the New Testament accurately. Jesus taught as one having authority and promised his disciples that they would "know the truth." And how often does the apostle Paul dogmatically affirm, "I know," and "I speak the truth."

What may be perceived as presumption is really confidence, confidence in the grace of God that allows for truth to be made known. I am aware, however, that theological statements may or may not represent absolute truth. As C. W. Brister has noted, "God is the absolute truth rather than mankind's statements about God in the

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form of theological propositions."[5] Although God and God's truth do not change, my personal understanding of God is always in some degree of change. How I view God today will hardly do for tomorrow, for tomorrow I will have grown, matured, gained new information, and interacted with new people. Preachers must be able to express with certainty the truth of God's Word while having, at the same time, their understanding of that truth being developed and refined each day. That is why we must never use our convictions to place ourselves above any human being. Our convictions must lead us to the noble virtues of love and acceptance. Preachers, like pilgrims on a journey, do not know all of the answers. But even as pilgrims being changed daily, they must preach with confidence born out of conviction. Ronald Sleeth affirms this about preachers by stating, "If he is persuaded of his message; if he knows intimately the God who is the source of his message; if this message has changed him and he reflects the change; then he has within his own experience the power, with God's help, to transform others."[6]

Second, regarding word and deed, I follow Christ's summary in Matt. 25:31-46, which relates to divine judgment to a lack of Christian social concern. Jesus' great interest in the welfare of the widow, the orphan, the outcast, the sick, the poor, the demoniac, and the dispossessed has stimulated in me the extension of this social ministry. To preach about the building up of the church or of extending the world-wide mission of the church, without due concern for the shape of humanity's suffering would be a travesty indeed.

As I offer the grace that I have received I must remember that that same grace obligates me toward positive action. I must be interested not only in the spiritual welfare

[5]C. W. Brister, Pastoral Care in the Church (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 9.

[6]Sleeth, 22.

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of others, but also of their physical welfare. As a preacher I am not called of God to simply evangelize in the sense of proclamation, but also to "Emmanuelize" in the sense of Christian presence and action. My experience is that words alone and deeds alone are for the most part ineffective toward the goal of creating positive changes in the lives of individuals and the whole of society. Only when word and deed are combined will the Christian witness true change. And only when word and deed are combined does the world see an accurate portrayal of Jesus Christ.

The purpose of this project has been to reveal the vast possibilities which communication affords both speaker and listener through the use of rhetoric, persuasion, and style. We have examined the world of marketing and advertising to ask ourselves what facets of communication and persuasion produce tangible results which can be transferred to the art of preaching. Audience analysis has been the significant focus of this paper because audience analysis is the primary focus of marketing. Perhaps we should sum up the key points.

Audience Analysis

All too often preachers fall victim to the notion that because God's Word is powerful, all one must do is speak it and it will do its work. This kind of thinking should be labeled as Christian superstition. Richard Caemmerer warns against such an approach when he says, "the result is that the preacher will concentrate on making his sermon true and correct, loud and distinct, but not necessarily interesting. The hearers will concentrate on being present, orderly and decorous, but not necessarily attentive."[7] Words are of little value if people are not listening to them, even if they are God's words.

[7]Richard R. Caemmerer, Preaching for the Church (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), 41.

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It has always fascinated me that the same people who stand dogmatically for the humanity of Christ, oppose the humanity of preaching. The truth is that God's words will only reach the human heart through the same channels of hearing and attention that any other word must use.[8] Preaching may end somewhere in the heavenlies, but it always begins at a human level.

Interest

Of primary concern to the preacher is the art of being interesting. Preachers should familiarize themselves with those things that an audience would tend to find interesting. Paul Egertson has compiled a "Decalogue of Interest" which is helpful:

1. Suspense is more interesting than certainty.
2. The concrete is more interesting than the abstract.
3. People are more interesting than things.
4. The immediate is more interesting than the distant.
5. Images are more interesting than definitions.
6. The humorous is more interesting than the serious.
7. Conflict is more interesting than concord.
8. The familiar is more interesting than the foreign.
9. Events are more interesting than ideas.
10. The practical is more interesting than the theoretical.[9]

To be interesting demands that certain methods of preaching be abandoned and allowed to die an ignoble death, and that new methods be embraced. The day of

[8]Caemmerer, 42.

[9]Egertson, 51.

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warehouse homiletics and its accompanying emphasis on substance, to the exclusion of style, must cease. The standard three-points and a poem must be replaced with variety of form and style, story telling, images, humor, transparency, and relevance. Defining preaching as truth through personality omits the fact that preaching is also done in the midst of personalities. Sweazey makes an important statement which reflects the speaker--listener relationship, "People together are a different sort of creature from people alone."[10] Talking to people must be replaced with talking with people. Trying to cram ideas from hours of exegetical labors into the minds of the hearers must be replaced with being creative enough to know what it is that allows for a hearer to voluntarily open his or her mind to hear.

In order to be interesting the preacher's task is to listen to the listeners, to find out the kinds of questions they are asking, their needs, desires, goals, etc. This can begin through information gathering and by being attentive to feedback. We touched on the area of feedback when we discussed communication as a dialogue, but perhaps we should reinforce this critical aspect of communication.

Feedback as Dialogue

The preacher who is attentive to and responds to feedback will be in a position to make necessary adjustments in the communication process. Feedback is a cybernetics term that deals with control systems which operate on the basis of information about effects. For the preacher it involves listening with the eyes. This may mean he or she will have to step away from manuscript preaching. The preacher must be aware of the effects of his or her communication in terms of behavioral relationship. Theodore Clevenger

[10]Sweazy, 5.

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and Jack Matthews mention, "It should be clear that the term feedback refers not to any catalog of listener behavior, but to a relationship between the between the behavior of the speaker, the response of the listener, and the effect of that response on the further behavior of the speaker."[11]

Feedback works in much the same way as communication; it demands a response. To avoid the monologue, preaching must never become a zero-feedback situation. Haddon Robinson tells us: "The most astute preachers allow their eyes and ears to program their mouths. As they stand in the pulpit, they respond to cues from the audience telling them how they are doing. As they prepare, they study not only content but also people, hearing the spoken and unspoken questions. After speaking, they listen intently to find out how they have done."[12]

Since feedback demands a response in order to be classified as feedback, the preacher will need to "retain some flexibility in his own behavior."[13] One of the most serious complaints of preaching is that it is delivered like a lecture without any sense of flexibility. This, of course, quenches any form of dialogue be it verbal or silent.

Feedback is dependent upon feedforward, whereby the speaker anticipates certain listener behaviors at given points in the delivery. "In human interaction, feedforward most often takes one of three forms: (1) goal-setting, (2) establishing expectancies, and (3) planning contingencies.[14] Do we have goals for the listener? Do we anticipate the

[11]Theodore Clevenger, Jr., and Jack Matthews, "Feedback," in Basic Readings in Communication Theory, ed. C. David Mortensen (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 154.

[12]Haddon Robinson, "Listening to the Listeners," Leadership 4, no. 2 (Spring 1983): 69.

[13]Clevenger and Matthews, 155.

[14]Clevenger and Matthews, 157.

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audiences expectancies? And have we established contingencies for certain audience behavior? The preacher needs both feedback and feedforward. Clevenger and Matthews state, "Without feedforward, feedback would be a static and sterile affair; and without flexible feedback, interaction could scarcely be human."[15]

Needs of the Hearers

A significant duty of every preacher is to avoid being boring. Since most audience boredom is the result a speaker's message being irrelevant, a preacher must discover and be attentive to the needs of the hearers. Edward Markquart provides us with an excellent summary of hearers' needs. The hearers need:

1. a preacher who is immersed in the message.
2. vivid images and analogies which can be remembered.
3. order and clarity.
4. repetition of words, phrases, and sentences.
5. familiar language.
6. facial honesty.
7. good eye contact.
8. conversational variations of the voice.
9. pacing, rhythm, and timing.
10. good stories, analogies, and illustrations.[16]

[15]Clevenger and Matthews, 160.

[16]Edward F. Markquart, Quest for Better Preaching (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985), 202.

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By watching and analyzing television commercials and other forms of advertising we can see and hear the attempts of Madison avenue to utilize all of the above needs of hearers. In many ways Madison Avenue is wiser than the preacher. It reminds me of a saying attributed to Jesus, "For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light." The statement is quite profound and startlingly accurate when addressing the current state of preaching.

Perhaps the problem is a matter of the preacher not having an adequate amount of time to prepare really good sermons. Although I would readily agree that the average pastor's schedule is extremely full and that time is a rare commodity, time-management researchers have discovered that most time problems can be solved with proper prioritization of life's demands. Sermon development must be one of the highest priorities for the pastor and must far exceed careful study and reflectionof the text. Sermon development also must include analysis and reflection birthed from contact with the lives of the congregation and from contact with the current world in which we live. It is this writer's opinion that sermons would be more effective if the amount of time spent on congregational analysis was at least equal with the amount of time expended on textual analyis. The attentive preacher should gather information and learn how to ask questions of the congregation as he or she goes about the duties associated with daily pastoral care (visitation, counseling, etc.). Preachers must ask questions within several different contexts such as, the congregational context, the personal socialization context, the language context, and the wider context of current world events.[17]

[17]Arthur Van Seters, Appendix to Preaching as a Social Act: Theology and Practice, 264 - 66.

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We can learn a great deal about the state of communication and culture by analyzing current advertising and marketing strategies. And why not use all of the tools of persuasion afforded us? The persuasive speech of Madison Avenue may or may not make any real difference in the quality of our lives, but for the preacher and congregation, persuasion as communication can mean the difference between life and death, harmony and faction, love and hate, or stagnancy and growth.

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APPENDIX A

Ordinary Folks Make Great Disciples*

by Stuart Briscoe

It used to be that you could talk about being a Christian and people would know what you meant. But then the term Christian got somewhat confused, and just about everybody who was born in a Christian country regarded himself as a Christian. Some people realize that simply being born in a Christian country—if you could find one—which you can't—wouldn't make you Christian. They had to put distance between themselves (the real Christians) and those who just thought they were. So they began to use the term "born again."

When Jimmy Carter was running for president, he said that he was a born-again Christian. Very few people knew what he was talking about except one reporter, Wesley Pippert, who has been to seminary. So he made a list of the terms Jimmy Carter was using and sent it out to the wires. Soon every person on radio and television was talking about being born-again. The problem then was that those people who were born again Christians began to discover everybody who just called themselves a Christian was now becoming a born-again Christian. Born-again meant a new start. So if you had arthroscopic surgery, you were a born-again athlete. And if you were an alcoholic and got dried-out, you were a born-again alcoholic. So the term born-again got devalued.

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The people who were the real ones had to put some distance between themselves and all these "born-agains," because frankly, everyone and his auntie was getting born-again. So they started to call themselves Spirit-filled, born-again Christians. The problem with that was as soon as you said Spirit-filled, people would say, "Do you mean Reformed Spirit-filled or charismatic Spirit-filled?" If you're Reformed, then of course you are separated from the charismatic, and so on. So then you had to get off into the millennium, because that became suddenly very important. So you became an A–, Pre–, or Postmillennial, Reformed, charismatic, Spirit-filled, born-again Christian. It became terribly important to get all your adjectives in a row like ducks. The trouble with this was that whilst it got everything clarified, it meant that you spent all your time in clarification.

So I started a movement. Nobody has joined it yet, but my wife is considering joining. The movement is that we stop talking about Christians, born-again Christians, Spirit-filled born-again Christians, charismatic Reformed Spirit-filled Christians, and all that stuff – we don't have time for all that – and that we go back to using a term that was in vogue long before Christian was ever invented. Do you know what people were called long before they were called Christians? This is what the Bible says: "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." I suggest we stop all this adjectival Christianity and just decide whether we are disciples of Jesus Christ.

People will debate the adjectives at great length and with considerable heat. But ask them a simple question – "Would you call yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ?" – and sometimes they back off as if they were uncomfortable with it.

Some people think a disciple is a Christian put up a notch or two, a first-class Christian. Other people have the idea that a disciple is somebody who has come through a course where you get up at some unearthly hour in the morning and go one-on-one with somebody over interminable cups of coffee. We've got the idea that

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"disciple" is a term you don't worry about if you just want to be a Christian. But if you get serious, or if you're obsessive-compulsive, then you get into a disciple course and come out discipled. This thinking needs to be re-evaluated.

I asked a woman, "What do you do?" She said, "I am a disciple of Jesus Christ very skillfully disguised as a computer operator." Would you call yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ? Let me encourage you; ordinary folks make great disciples. A disciple is somebody who has a relationship with a teacher. That is the simplest definition of a disciple.

In the New Testament times, all kinds of people had disciples. The Greeks had disciples. The Jews had a similar situation. The Rabbis gathered a little group around them and taught them the law, and the group would disseminate the information. They called those people disciples. A disciple is somebody who has a relationship with a teacher whom they learn from in order that they might develop what he is saying and propagate it.

Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ? You're sitting at his feet, hearing his Word. You're discovering his truth. You're identifying with him personally. Are you applying his principles? Are you gladly sharing these things and disseminating them?

The Lord Jesus showed us how important discipleship was by doing two things: The first thing he did in his public ministry was to go out and gather his disciples, and the second thing he did in his public ministry was gather those same disciples and say, "Go into all the world and make disciples of all the nations." It started with discipling and finished with discipling.

The Lord Jesus in Mark 8 outlines some basic things about being a disciple. I want to identify them for you. Here are the three things I want you to notice: first, the disciples were prepared to confront the issues he raised. For instance, in verse 35,

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"Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?" The issue is this: what on earth are you doing with your life? It's hard to imagine a bigger issue than that. Then he identifies two possibilities: you can invest your life, or you can waste your life. What a horrid thought – that it is possible for a human being to live the whole life and waste it! On the other hand, it is possible for you to invest your life. He said, "What determines whether your life is wasted or invested is your attitude toward me. If you want to hang on to your life for yourself, you will waste it. But if you want to hand over your life for me, you will invest it for eternity.

I met a young businesswoman last week. I pointed out these scriptures to here, and she said, " You mean to say that Jesus Christ wants me to confront the possibility that I might be wasting my life?" I said, "Right!" "And your are trying to tell me that if I hold onto my life, I will waste my life?" I said, "No, I'm not trying to tell you. Jesus said it. And not only that, he said the only way to make sure you really invest your life for eternity in the divine economy is to hand it over to him." She said, "No way." That was last Tuesday morning.

Sunday night she came to me literally trembling and said, "I've not been able to get that thought out of my mind all week. I might be wasting my life." I asked, "Are you the same Pat?" She said, "I'm the same one who rides her motorcycle at ninety-five miles an hour without a helmet and has never been afraid of anything, but now I'm utterly petrified." Why? Because she was daring to do what disciples of Jesus do – confront the issues. She quietly submitted her life to the Master last Sunday night. Do you call yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ? Disciples of Jesus Christ confront the issues he raises.

Here's another issue. After Jesus tells Peter and the other folks that he's going to Jerusalem, Peter stands between Jesus and Jerusalem and says, "Not so, Lord." Now

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that's a silly thing to say. You can say, "Not so," or you can say "Lord," but you are not to say, "Not so, Lord." The Lord turned to him and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Jesus is really saying, "If your life is governed by self-interest and self-preservation, that is all Satan wants out of you, because he has managed to get God out of the reckoning, and you running the show. Satan laughs all the way back to his hellish board room." So Jesus nailed Peter. It is possible to have your life operating under devilish influence, and instead of doing God's work, do the devil's work for him. A lot of people will duck it. They'll laugh it up, "Oh, you believe in a little guy with red tights and horns?" I'm talking about a devilish force that is capable of so fouling people's thinking that they can come to the conclusion that they are the master of all they survey, the center of the universe. All the evidence to the contrary, they'll believe it. It takes a devilish force to make people so stupid and destructive. Would you call yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ? Disciples of Jesus Christ confront the issues Christ raises.

Second, disciples of Jesus Christ confirm the claims Christ made. When you talk to people about Christianity, one of the oldest tricks in the trade is for them to start talking about what Christians are doing to Muslims in Lebanon or what Christians are doing to Christians in the north of Ireland. These things are not insignificant, but Christianity does not stand or fall on whether the Spanish Inquisition was right, or the Reformation was right. Christianity stands or falls on whether Jesus Christ was who he said he was — or not. And disciples of Jesus Christ are ready to carefully evaluate the claims he made and then confirm that those claims are true. If disciples of Jesus Christ can't do that, if they cannot build their lives on the absolute bedrock certainty that Jesus Christ is Lord, then it's only a matter of time until they've collapsed. Christianity stands or falls on the validity of Jesus Christ.

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Talking to his disciples, Jesus said, "Who do people say that I am?" They all had their answers ready. They had been out polling the people at Jerusalem International Airport. But what they did not expect was the next question: "Now, who do you say that I am?" That's what the disciples of Jesus Christ are ready for. They are ready to answer questions concerning who Jesus Christ is. Peter had the answer immediately. Peter didn't necessarily understand the question, but he always had an answer. "Thou art the Christ." He was so thrilled. He was right, of course. Can you imagine how discouraged he must have been to have Jesus respond immediately, "Don't tell anyone." Why not? Because immediately the Lord begins to talk about himself. He said, " I'm going up to Jerusalem. I'm going to suffer many things." Peter starts to shake his head. "And I'll be rejected by the chief priests, elders, and scribes."

"What?"

"And I'll be killed."

"Oh, no, no!"

"And on the third day, I'll rise again."

"NO-O-O-O!" At this point Peter's had all he can take, and he stands in front of Jesus and says, "No way!" It's clear now why Jesus told him not to tell anybody. He got the answer right, but he's all wrong. He knows that Jesus is the Christ, but he hasn't the foggiest idea what kind of Christ he is.

Just about everybody is capable of producing their own Christ. That's why messiahs and saviors are a dime a dozen. Everybody's getting out there and deciding what they need and manufacturing a christ who fits conveniently into their area of need. So the christ produced today is a christ not of reality, but a christ of fantasy. Peter's christ was not going to suffer or be rejected or be killed. Therefore, it was not necessary for Peter's christ to rise again from the dead. On every point Peter's christ and Jesus of

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Nazareth clashed. That's why it would be most inappropriate for him to go around and tell people. He hadn't even gotten to first base.

Here's the problem today – if we're not careful, we can produce christs who are figments of our imaginations rather than the Christ who is the result of divine incarnation. The real Christ is the rejected Christ. If we are going to identify with the rejected Christ, that means a certain degree of rejection attaches to us. But, if there is one thing we don't need, it's what? Rejection. If there's one thing we crave, what is it? Acceptance. But we have a feeling that if we identify with a rejected Christ, then we might find ourselves outside the camp. And funny enough, that's exactly where disciples eventually finish up.

It's interesting to notice the three groups of people who are going to reject Christ: the political leaders, the moral leaders, and the religious leaders. Let me suggest to you that modern political systems, modern religious systems, and modern moral systems still reject Jesus Christ. The mistake a lot of people make is they want Jesus Christ to fit into their morals; they'd like to fit him into their religion; and many of them, would you believe, want him to be a card-carrying member of their political party. They haven't understood that Jesus Christ always stands in judgment upon our religion, our morals, and our politics, and speaks so fervently and forcefully about them (and often against them) that we find our politics and religion and our morals locking horns with Christ's. Disciples of Jesus Christ know that. They don't change their Christ. They change their politics, and their morals, and their religion. Would you say you're a disciple of Jesus Christ – the rejected Christ?

"On the third day," Jesus went on to say, "I'll rise again from the dead." That was certainly not on Peter's agenda. How could Jesus rise from the dead if he wasn't going to die? But what Peter didn't understand was that it was only the death of Jesus on the cross

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for our sin, and his glorious Resurrection from the dead, that would put under his feet everything that went over everybody else's head.

There's a third thing about these disciples: they conform to the pattern Christ outlined. Let me read to you some challenging words, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."

The expression "to come after" is used of a lover coming after the beloved one. It is used of the learner coming after the teacher. It is used of servants gladly following the one whom they serve. I was in Edinburgh about a year ago speaking at Charlotte Chapel, and a delightful young lady gave her testimony. She had come back from Kabul, Afghanistan, where she was a missionary nurse. She said how she was really enjoying the work she was doing there, and then she had met a young man and fallen in love. He had asked her to marry him, but she said, "I made a commitment to my church back home to serve on the mission field. If I marry you, that might change everything. So before I can give you an answer I need to talk with the leaders of the church." And so that is why she was home. She had flown home all the way from Afghanistan to talk with the leaders of the church. As I was looking at the congregation, I noticed a fellow sitting on the front row who had the weirdest look on his face. So when she was through and sat down next to me, I said, "Who is that fellow?" "Do you know him?" She said, "That's the young man." I said, "I thought he was in Kabul?" She said, "He was. He heard I was flying back to Scotland to talk with the leaders of the church, so he said he wanted to talk with them as well. So he jumped on the next plane." You can always tell lovers: they don't give up. They "come after," as a lover comes after the beloved. And that's the picture Jesus gives, "If you're going to come after me, it's because you love me, because I first loved you, and there's something about me that draws you irresistibly to me." There comes a time when the disciple says, "I

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recognize that a decision needs to be made that will have to be constantly reaffirmed and endorsed: I will say no to myself and yeas to him." Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Frank Sinatra, that well-known theologian says, "I did it my way." We look at him and say, "Frank, thank you for letting us know how you got yourself into the mess you're in. Now we know what to avoid." Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could say, "I did it God's way?" Denying yourself, doing it his way – that's a disciple.

When Jesus took up his cross, he wasn't putting up with the inevitable. He didn't have a chip on one shoulder and a cross on the other. When Jesus took up his cross, he was identifying with the Father's will, but not without a struggle. There are some things that may even be legitimate, that for the sake of Christ, a disciple is prepared to die to.

I taught all my kids to enjoy running. Then they taught me how not to enjoy it. While I could keep a pace ahead of them, it was great. But when they began to haul me out of bed on an early, frosty morning to run, or when my daughter had me running a 10,000 meter race, I started asking, "What in the world am I doing?" I asked the question even more when we got to the start. There were 24,998 others. Being from Milwaukee, some of them were dressed as beer bottles. One guy dressed up as a banana, another as a bunch of grapes. The gun went off, and everybody was laughing and waving. The banana was shaking hands with the crowd. And then it got rather interesting after about a quarter of a mile. The banana and the beer bottle were hanging over a garden fence – didn't look good at all. After about a mile there was no chattering or laughing. And after the second mile the only sound was labored breathing. After the fourth mile, it was so quiet you could hear the birds singing. At 6.2 miles, people were dribbling in one at a time, and not many of them. The moral of the story is this: you get all kinds of people goofing off at the start, but that doesn't count. To finish does, and disciples of Jesus Christ keep on going.

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The Lord Jesus came looking for disciples, and at the end of his ministry told the church to do one thing: make disciples. Some of you are going out tomorrow morning and say, "Look out! Here comes another disciple of Jesus Christ skillfully disguised as a stockbroker." And somebody else is going to say, "Look out, neighborhood. Here's a busy disciple of Jesus Christ disguised as a homemaker." No matter what your vocation, if you're disciples of Jesus Christ, that will be your predominant thought. What you are disguised as is secondary. You're going to be out there loving, following, serving, and leading others to him. Would you call yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ?

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APPENDIX B

Sample Demographics*

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Selected Tacoma MSA Profiles

Working Women
Home Owners
Households With Incomes Over $35,000 per Year



	Working Women	Percent Working Women	Home Owners	Percent Home Owners	Household Income Over $35,000	Percent Income Over $35,000
Pierce County Adults	98,300	100%	227,300	100%	123,800	100%
Male	——	——	107,900	47%	70,000	57%
Female	98,300	100%	119,400	53%	53,800	43%
Age						
18 to 24 years	17,400	18%	18,400	8%	12,000	10%
25 to 34 years	29,700	30%	40,500	18%	30,000	24%
35 to 44 years	26,500	27%	51,500	23%	37,000	30%
45 to 54 years	14,200	14%	39,200	17%	25,800	21%
55 to 64 years	8,200	8%	35,000	15%	13,700	11%
65 or older	2,400	2%	42,500	19%	5,200	4%
Household Income *						
$35,000 or more	34,000	35%	100,200	44%	123,800	100%
$25,000 to $34,999	18,600	19%	48,000	21%	——	——
$20,000 to $24,999	16,400	17%	26,100	11%	——	——
$10,000 to $19,999	20,800	21%	35,600	16%	——	——
Under $10,000	8,500	9%	17,100	8%	——	——
Employment						
Employed full-time	69,200	70%	106,900	47%	79,600	64%
Employed part-time	29,200	30%	23,100	10%	10,000	8%
Retired	——	——	52,200	23%	11,100	9%
Others not employed	——	——	44,900	20%	22,900	18%
Homemaker	——	——	32,600	14%	16,900	14%
Working women	98,300	100%	56,900	25%	33,700	27%
Education						
College graduate	23,000	23%	58,700	26%	50,500	41%
Some college	38,200	39%	73,900	33%	41,400	33%
High school graduate	30,700	31%	74,000	33%	29,000	23%
Not high school grad	6,100	6%	20,500	9%	2,800	2%
Marital Status						
Married	61,500	63%	159,500	70%	89,100	72%
Single	18,400	19%	30,700	14%	19,600	16%
Widowed	4,000	4%	18,800	8%	3,100	3%
Divorced, separated	12,800	13%	16,400	7%	10,100	8%
Home Ownership						
Own home	56,900	58%	227,300	100%	97,900	79%
Rent home	40,100	41%	——	——	23,900	19%

Questions:
"Are you currently... employed full-time, employed part-time...? Do you own or rent your place of residence? Which of the following general income classes was your TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME before taxes in 1987? Please include any income you get from jobs, investments, from pensions, or from any other sources." Gender was determined by the interviewer based on the respondent's tone of voice and general responses.
See page 9 for additional demographic questions.
* All figures shown are not adjusted for "dont knows" and refusals except income. Household income percentages were calculated by dividing each individual income level by the total number of respondents giving an income. The total population was then multiplied by these percentages to yield adjusted numbers of adults in each income level. Personal demographics refer to the actual respondent. Household demographics refer to adults living in households with those characteristics.
A dash (——) indicates no responses were given in a specific category.

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Selected Tacoma MSA Profiles

Working Women
Home Owners
Households With Incomes Over $35,000 per Year

The tables on this and the facing page show demographics of some common consumer target groups.

The standard demographic table is adequate for most applications, but can lead to confusion when the consumer target is itself a demographic group which does not fit snuggly into the "standard" definitions.

An example is the column "Household Income Over $35,000." The income $35,000 is halfway between the "$30,000 to $39,999" range used under "Household Income" in the table.

If one were not careful, one might read the table as "54,300 adults with incomes over $35,000 have incomes between $30,000 and $39,999."

While this is correct, it sounds odd. In this case, a more precise way to read the table would be "54,300 adults with incomes over $35,000 have incomes between $35,000 and $39,999."

	Working Women	Percent Working Women	Home Owners	Percent Home Owners	Household † Income Over $35,000	Percent † Income Over $35,000
Pierce County Adults	**108,100**	**100%**	**251,500**	**100%**	**171,400**	**100%**
Males	——	——	124,900	50%	91,500	53%
Females	108,100	100%	126,600	50%	79,900	47%
Age						
18 to 24 years	18,400	17%	19,900	8%	23,300	14%
25 to 34 years	27,900	26%	45,200	18%	42,000	25%
35 to 44 years	30,900	29%	58,500	23%	43,800	26%
45 to 54 years	18,400	17%	42,400	17%	34,000	20%
55 to 64 years	10,200	9%	36,500	15%	16,800	10%
65 or older	2,400	2%	48,800	19%	11,500	7%
Household Income †						
$50,000 or more	19,700	18%	60,900	24%	61,600	36%
$40,000 to $49,999	17,000	16%	46,400	18%	55,500	32%
$30,000 to $39,999	32,500	30%	70,800	28%	54,300	32%
$20,000 to $29,999	20,900	19%	43,600	17%	——	——
$10,000 to $19,999	14,600	14%	23,900	10%	——	——
Under $10,000	3,400	3%	6,000	2%	——	——
Employment						
Employed full-time	76,700	71%	126,600	50%	112,300	66%
Employed part-time	31,500	29%	28,800	11%	20,200	12%
Retired	——	——	57,100	23%	13,900	8%
Other not employed	——	——	38,900	15%	25,000	15%
Occupation ††						
Profession, manager	27,100	25%	48,100	19%	45,100	26%
Sales, service	69,500	64%	66,500	26%	55,400	32%
Craft, repair, labor	10,100	9%	42,500	17%	33,500	20%
Homemaker	60,100	56%	112,100	45%	65,100	38%
Education						
College graduate	22,400	21%	52,400	21%	45,700	27%
Some college	31,400	29%	66,600	26%	48,600	28%
High school graduate	46,300	43%	104,500	42%	67,900	40%
Not high school grad	7,200	7%	27,100	11%	9,100	5%
Marital Status						
Married	63,000	58%	168,200	67%	122,200	71%
Single	20,500	19%	34,500	14%	29,300	17%
Divorced, separated	19,200	18%	27,200	11%	16,600	10%
Widowed	4,900	5%	20,700	8%	2,900	2%
Home Ownership	**67,400**	**62%**	**251,400**	**100%**	**131,500**	**77%**
Own with mortgage	53,700	50%	166,200	66%	105,600	62%
Own free and clear	13,700	13%	85,200	34%	25,900	15%
Rent or lease	33,500	31%	——	——	32,800	19%
Respondents	*564*		*1,288*		*823*	

Questions:
See page 13 for actual demographic questions. † All figures shown are not adjusted for "don't knows" and refusals except income. Household income percentages were calculated by dividing each income level by the total number of respondents giving an income. The total population was then multiplied by these percentages to yield adjusted numbers of adults in each income level.
†† Occupations include adults on leave or temporarily laid-off. In addition, supervisors are counted under "sales and service" rather than "profession, manager" as in prior reports. A dash (——) indicates no responses were given in a specific category.

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Market Area Household Demographics

Detailed Demographics

	Total Sample Adults	Percent Total Sample	Pierce County Adults	Percent Pierce County Adults	South King County Adults	Percent S. King County Adults
Total Adults	538,300	100%	401,800	100%	136,500	100%
Dwelling Type						
Single family dwelling	378,700	70%	279,100	69%	99,600	73%
Apartment	103,100	19%	77,000	19%	26,100	19%
Other multiple dwelling	21,000	4%	15,800	4%	5,200	4%
Mobile home, other	33,900	6%	28,900	7%	5,100	4%
Home Ownership						
Own home	318,000	59%	227,300	57%	90,700	66%
Rent home	213,200	40%	168,700	42%	44,500	33%
Home Mortgage						
First mortgage only	185,600	34%	130,800	33%	54,800	40%
Second mortgage	43,600	8%	29,100	7%	14,600	11%
Have no mortgage	304,800	57%	238,500	59%	66,300	49%
Children Present						
Under 1 year old	34,200	6%	22,600	6%	11,600	8%
1 to 6 years	106,400	20%	78,400	20%	28,000	21%
7 to 11 years	61,200	11%	50,200	12%	10,900	8%
12 to 14 years	50,900	9%	43,900	11%	7,000	5%
15 to 17 years	51,200	10%	36,400	9%	14,900	11%
No children present	256,200	48%	192,500	48%	63,600	47%
Persons per Household						
1 person	89,100	17%	67,600	17%	21,500	16%
2 persons	181,700	34%	132,000	33%	49,700	36%
3 to 4 persons	201,700	37%	150,700	38%	51,000	37%
5 or more persons	61,600	11%	48,800	12%	12,900	9%
Employed Adults						
1 employed adult	183,100	34%	133,200	33%	49,900	37%
2 employed adults	219,200	41%	162,200	40%	57,000	42%
3 or more employed	49,400	9%	35,600	9%	13,700	10%
No employed adults	84,400	16%	69,100	17%	15,300	11%
Length of Residence in Home						
1 year or less	125,900	23%	101,100	25%	24,800	18%
1 to 3 years	114,900	21%	84,500	21%	30,400	22%
3 to 5 years	58,400	11%	38,200	10%	20,200	15%
5 or more years	237,800	44%	177,200	44%	60,600	44%
Length of Residence in County						
1 year or less	47,300	9%	39,500	10%	7,800	6%
1 to 3 years	59,100	11%	46,500	12%	12,500	9%
3 to 5 years	40,100	7%	31,000	8%	9,100	7%
5 or more years	390,700	73%	284,300	71%	106,400	78%

Questions:
See page 9 for actual demographic questions.
* All figures shown are not adjusted for "don't knows" and refusals except income. Household income percentages were calculated by dividing each individual income level by the total number of respondents giving an income. The total population was then multiplied by these percentages to yield adjusted numbers of adults in each income level. Personal demographics refer to the actual respondent. Household demographics refer to adults living in households with those characteristics.

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Market Area Household Demographics

Detailed Demographics

Information on this page represents adults living in households with these qualities, rather than the households themselves.

	Pierce and South King Adults	Percent Pierce South King	Pierce County Adults	Percent Pierce County Adults	South King County Adults	Percent S. King County Adults
Total Adults	564,400	100%	416,900	100%	147,500	100%
Dwelling Type						
Single family dwelling	372,600	66%	280,600	67%	91,900	62%
Multiple family home	173,300	31%	125,800	31%	47,400	32%
Other dwelling type	64,600	11%	41,400	10%	23,100	16%
Home Ownership	343,400	61%	251,400	60%	91,900	62%
Own with mortgage	237,800	42%	166,200	40%	71,600	49%
Own free and clear	105,600	19%	85,200	20%	20,300	14%
Rent or lease	182,600	32%	132,600	32%	50,000	34%
Children Present						
Less than 2 years	52,500	9%	38,100	9%	14,300	10%
2 to 5 years	109,400	19%	77,700	19%	31,800	22%
6 to 11 years	121,900	22%	85,500	21%	36,400	25%
12 to 17 years	83,000	15%	61,200	15%	21,900	15%
No children present	319,200	57%	239,900	58%	79,200	54%
Persons per Household						
One person	81,600	14%	63,800	15%	17,800	12%
Two persons	190,700	34%	142,400	34%	48,300	33%
Three to four persons	218,200	39%	157,400	38%	60,800	41%
Five or more persons	72,200	13%	52,000	13%	20,300	14%
Average persons per household		2.9		2.9		2.9
Employed Persons						
One employed person	200,700	36%	151,300	36%	49,400	33%
Two employed persons	214,000	38%	145,300	35%	68,700	47%
Three or more	52,700	9%	38,700	9%	14,000	10%
No employed persons	91,900	16%	78,500	19%	13,400	9%
Income per Capita †						
$25,000 or more	73,269	13%	49,039	12%	24,212	17%
$15,000 to $24,999	160,975	29%	114,266	28%	46,609	32%
$5,000 to $14,999	274,067	49%	206,709	50%	67,068	46%
Under $5,000	49,688	9%	41,486	10%	8,111	6%
Average income per capita		$15,448		$15,023		$16,659
Length of Residence in Home						
Under one year	110,900	20%	81,200	19%	29,700	20%
One to three years	124,400	22%	88,000	21%	36,400	25%
Three to five years	73,000	13%	53,600	13%	19,400	13%
Five or more years	253,500	45%	192,100	46%	61,400	42%
Length of Residence in County						
Under one year	35,200	6%	27,500	7%	7,700	5%
One to three years	51,600	9%	40,700	10%	10,900	7%
Three to five years	35,700	6%	27,900	7%	7,700	5%
Five or more years	439,800	78%	319,100	77%	120,700	82%
Respondents	*2,548*		*2,128*			*420*

See page 13 for actual demographic questions. † All figures shown are not adjusted for "don't knows" and refusals except income. Income per capita was calculated by dividing household income by the number of persons in the household, then adjusting this figure in the same manner as household income was. See footnote on page 18.

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